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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

For the Christian Observer.

MEMOIR OF BISHOP WILSON.

(Continued from p. 576.)

HAVING traced the conduct of Bishop Wilson through the subordinate stations which he had hitherto occupied and adorned, I proceed to exhibit him in the discharge of the episcopal office, upon the important duties of which he entered with his characteristic ardour and self-devotion. On his arrival at his bishoprick, he found the palace nearly dilapidated, and the demesne wild and neglected: these he soon reduced to a state of neatness and order, at an expense of 1400*l*. The only sensation of regret which he appears to have felt on account of this necessary expenditure, was the diminution caused by it of the alms which he wished to bestow upon the poor. But by the judicious management of his revenue, he was soon enabled not only to discharge all the demands which these improvements occasioned, but to form and pursue extensive plans of charity, the beneficial effects of which are still felt throughout the island. The frame of mind in which he conducted these beneficent exertions may be inferred from the prayer which he offered up on laying the first stone of a new chapel at Castle-town:—"O my great Master, let me not satisfy myself with building and beautifying the places dedicated to thy honour; but assist me by thy Holy Spirit, that I may use my utmost endeavours to make every one of these people living temples of the living God, that they

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may believe in Thee, the chief corner-stone, and that by this faith both they and I may at last come to worship Thee in heaven, and to give Thee praise and glory for all thy mercies bestowed upon us; for Thou art worthy O Lord, to receive power, and honour, and glory, for Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Charity, so to speak, was his cardinal virtue. Though the revenues of his bishoprick did not, it is said, at first exceed 300*l*. per annum, yet under his judicious management they appeared inexhaustible. The produce of his land was his principal resource: he had a bin for the poor in his barn, as well as a box in his house; and he never failed to inspect it in order to see that it was regularly replenished, even at times of great scarcity in the island. He also established manufactories and houses of industry on his estates, for the purpose of supplying the indigent with employment and clothing. Those who could weave or spin were furnished with wool, and were allowed to exchange their simple manufactures for corn. To prevent a misapplication of his bounty, the Bishop required the native poor who applied for relief to bring notes of recommendation from the ministers of their respective parishes: these he regularly filed, and from them entered the names and circumstances of his petitioners in a large book, which he called *matricula pauperum*; by which regulation he came in time to have an accurate knowledge of the state of the poor throughout the

island, so as to know how best to relieve their necessities.

Some of his benevolent projects were of a very enlarged nature. He paid particular attention to the advancement of agriculture throughout the island; and supplied the yeomanry with the best works on the subject. His own demesne exhibited, in a striking manner, the advantages of good husbandry, and presented a model for the imitation of his less instructed neighbours.

But the education of the children of his diocese was among the most favourite objects of his attention. He was unwearied in establishing parochial schools throughout the island, and drew up valuable rules for their management. As a most important appendage to these, he instituted parochial libraries, and, with the assistance of Dr. Bray, succeeded in enriching every parish in his diocese with a useful collection of books, chiefly on subjects of practical divinity. Most of these still remain, and have been of great service both to the clergy and laity of the island. The libraries at the academies of Castle-town and Douglas, which were founded by him, have been of essential benefit to many a student and candidate for holy orders. A taste for useful reading has been widely diffused in the island by means of these endowments.

Like the excellent Bishop Bedel, Bishop Wilson deeply felt the importance of instructing the inhabitants of his diocese through the medium of their native tongue. For this purpose he diligently applied himself to the Manks language, and succeeded so well as to read, and write, and speak it without hesitation; and he took singular pleasure in accosting the peasantry in their native phrases of salutation. In the year 1699, he published his "*Principles and Duties of Christianity*," the first work ever printed in the Manks language. He also procured a translation of the Gospel of St. Matthew

into that dialect, which he printed at his own expense, and circulated throughout the island. He afterwards procured a translation of the other Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles. The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and more recently the Bible Society, have paid much attention to the religious necessities of the islanders; so that at the present moment Mr. Stowel relates, that scarcely a cottage or hut is to be found in which there are not a Bible and Prayer-book in Manks or English, with some of Bishop Wilson's own publications or other useful tracts.

The good Bishop was very anxious to encourage the regular performance of family devotion in every dwelling in his diocese. The prayers which he drew up for this purpose have been used by tens of thousands of persons, up to the present hour: they have been firmly imprinted in the memories, and are still daily offered by the lips, of many who have never learned to read. The Bishop was frequent and earnest in his charges to his clergy on this important subject; and one of the first questions which he was accustomed to put to all his friends, when they entered upon housekeeping, was, "Have you set up an altar in your family?" What he taught in this respect, he practised. He assembled the members of his domestic circle, at six o'clock every morning in the summer season, and at seven in the winter, in his chapel, for the performance of this duty. The evening devotions were conducted with equal regularity; and much benefit both to his own household and to his numerous visitors and guests, particularly the younger clergy and candidates for holy orders, seems to have resulted from the devout fervour with which this daily solemnity was conducted.

Bishop Wilson was a constant and earnest preacher. During his residence in the Isle of Man, for fifty-eight years, he regularly on

every Sunday throughout the year, when not prevented by sickness, either preached, expounded the Scriptures, or offered up prayer in public, always bearing some part in the solemn ministrations of the day. He would frequently ride to the most distant parishes of his diocese on the morning, and join the congregation, and proclaim amongst them "the glad tidings of salvation." These unexpected visits gave him an opportunity of observing how the public service was attended, and of marking the behaviour both of minister and people. Far from regarding his eminent station in the church, as affording an exemption from pastoral labour, he considered it as an imperious call to double diligence, and more abundant exertion.

While thus vigorously engaged in diffusing religion abroad, he was careful to maintain its life and power in his own heart. Three times a day he regularly retired for secret devotion. He accustomed himself to frequent self-examination, and reviewed every part of his conduct with the severity of a strict and impartial judge. His "*Sacra Privata*" discover the fervent exercises of his soul in these hours of holy retirement. They often present him in the attitude of a penitent, confessing his unworthiness, and often exhibit him pouring forth songs of thanksgiving. The following specimens may be acceptable and profitable to the reader.

"What would become of *me*, if thou, O God, shouldst not have *mercy* upon me? For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquities, for they are great. My only comfort is, they are not too great for thy mercy. And the Lord Jesus our Advocate has assured us, even with an oath (Mark iii. 22,) That all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men; that is, those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto God."

"O most powerful Advocate! I

put my cause into thy hands; let it be unto thy servant according to thy word: let thy blood and merits plead for my pardon; say unto me, as thou didst unto the penitent in thy Gospel, 'Thy sins are forgiven.' And grant that I may live to 'bring forth fruits meet for repentance.' Let thy glory be magnified by saving a sinner; by redeeming a captive slave; by enlightening a mind overwhelmed in darkness; by changing a wicked heart, by pardoning innumerable transgressions, iniquities, and sins."

"O Almighty God and most merciful Father, who day after day dost minister to sinful man infinite occasions of praising Thee, accept of my unfeigned thanks, for all the blessings I have this day received, and every day receive, from thy good Providence: That, of thy own mere goodness, and without any merit of mine, or of my forefathers, thou hast given me a being, from honest and religious parents; and in such a part of the world, where the Christian religion is purely taught, and thy sacraments duly administered: That thou didst endue me with reason and perfect senses; and, to make these more comfortable to me, didst give me a sound and healthful body: That thou didst preside over my education, and gavest me an early knowledge of thee, my Creator and Redeemer: That thou hast preserved me ever since my birth; and vouchsafed me health and liberty, and a competency of means to support me: That thou hast redeemed me by thy Son; and given me a share in his merits; sanctified me by thy Holy Spirit; called me to thy *immediate* service; raised me above the level of my father's house; and continually hast heaped unexpected favours upon me: That thou hast given me honourable and honest friends, to admonish, to counsel, to encourage, to support me, by their interest and advice: That thou hast

been my refuge in tribulation, and my defence in all adversities ; delivering me from dangers, infamy, and troubles. For all thy known or unobserved deliverances, I praise thy good providence ; and for the guard thy holy angels keep over me. When I went astray, thou didst reduce me ; when I was sad, thou didst comfort me ; when I offended thee, thou didst forbear and gently correct me, and didst long expect my repentance ; and when, for the grievousness of my sins, I was ready to despair, thou didst keep me from utter ruin ; thou hast delivered me from the snares and assaults of the devil ; thou hast not only preserved my soul, but my body, from destruction, when sicknesses and infirmities took hold of me."

"As there is no hour of my life that I do not enjoy thy favours, and taste of thy goodness, so (if my frailty would permit) I would spend no part of my life without remembering them. Praise the Lord, then, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name. Glory be to Thee, O Lord, my Creator. Glory be to Thee, O Jesus, my Redeemer. Glory be to the Holy Ghost, my Sanctifier, my Guide and Comforter. All love, all glory, be to the high and undivided Trinity, whose works are inseparable, and whose dominion endureth world without end. Amen."

The Bishop's conduct towards his clergy was highly exemplary. He regularly held an annual convocation, at which he addressed them affectionately and earnestly on their pastoral duties, and on the most effectual way of discharging them. Convocations in the Isle of Man are not like those in England, which require the king's authority to warrant them ; but are diocesan synods or visitations, either annual, appointed by statute, or occasional, when the Bishop calls together all, or as many of the clergy as he thinks proper, to communicate with them, or to advise with them,

about any matter of moment which concerns the church. Several of Bishop Wilson's Charges, delivered at these convocations, have been published since his death. They treat principally of the prevailing sins of the period at which they were delivered, the due exercise of church discipline, the measures to be adopted for the advancement of religion, the best means of instructing the rising generation, and of diffusing scriptural knowledge and practice among all classes of the community. The following passages may serve as a specimen of his useful exhortations on these occasions.

"Bishop's Court, June 19, 1715.

"My Brethren,

"The last time we met in convocation, I recommended to you the necessity of bringing all our people to family devotions, if ever we expect to see a reformation of manners or serious religion amongst us. It concerns me to know how far your care and pains have been used to introduce this godly practice.

"And let me observe to you, that as the Bishop visits his diocese at least once a year in person, so every clergyman should at least so often visit every family and soul of his parish, capable of receiving his instruction, that we may all of us be able to give a comfortable account of our labours to our great Master. You will soon see the great use of keeping such an account in writing, of your parishes, as I do of my whole diocese.

"I take upon me to say, that a clergyman who does this conscientiously will have more comfort from this work, when he comes to die, than from any other part of his labours. Besides this, you will have before your eyes the state of your parishioners, who are poor, and will want your own help and charity, or are fit to be recommended to others. You will see,

at one view, who neglect to send their children to school, their servants to be catechised and fitted for confirmation; you will be able to answer the church's design in the first rubric before the Communion Service which I have so often recommended to your consideration: besides a great many good ends, which will be served by such a book of Parochialia, kept as it should be."

Speaking of the great utility and necessity of catechising and familiar instruction, the Bishop remarks in another of his Pastoral Charges: "The most unlearned know by nature the things contained in the law, as soon as they hear it read; but *these* are the things which they want to be particularly and often instructed in, and made sensible of;—that is, the extreme danger a sinner is in, while he is under the displeasure of a holy and just God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell; how a sinner, made sensible and awakened with the danger he is in, may be restored to God's favour; of the blessing and comfort of a Redeemer; what that blessed Redeemer has done and suffered, to restore us to the favour of God; what means of grace he has appointed as absolutely necessary to preserve us in the favour of God, and in the state of salvation.

"Christians too often want to be set right, and very particularly to be instructed in the nature of repentance, of that repentance to which God has promised mercy and pardon, and of that faith which is saving, and accompanied with good works, and a holy and Christian life.

"These are foundation principles, and such as every pastor of souls is obliged to explain as he hopes ever to do good by his other labours and sermons. We say to explain, not only in set discourses out of the pulpit, but in a plain, familiar manner, out of the desk, where questions

may be asked, and things explained, so as both old and young may be edified. Preaching will always be our duty; but it is of little use to those who understand not the meaning of the words we make use of in our sermons, as, God knows, too many must be supposed not to do, for want of their being instructed in their younger years. Many people labour under a very sad mistake, that people cannot be very ignorant of their duty in a Christian country; and yet we see too many can make a shift amongst us to continue in the ways of sin and damnation, notwithstanding the sermons they hear every Lord's day."

Bishop Wilson entered the marriage state in the year 1698, and by his exemplary conduct in it, added a new attestation to the truth and influence of his Christian principles. The object of his choice was a Miss Patten, of Warrington, who seems to have been in every respect worthy of such a husband. He himself describes her, as possessing great modesty and meekness of spirit, exhibiting remarkable dutifulness to her parents, and the most affectionate attachment to himself, performing all the offices of a kind and pious mother, governing her house with mildness and prudence, and evidencing great humility of deportment, and a peculiar spirit of Christian charity towards the indigent and distressed. By this excellent woman he had two sons and two daughters, all of whom died at an early age; except Thomas, the youngest, who survived his father, and became a Prebendary of Westminster, and Rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook. The Bishop's diligent attention to his public duties did not render him negligent of his domestic concerns. He was anxiously attentive to every conjugal and parental obligation, and was unwearied and eminently successful in his endeavours that his household should

be an example to his clergy and the flock. He had the great calamity of losing his amiable pious consort about six years after their marriage. Alarming symptoms of indisposition having begun to appear, her affectionate partner had accompanied her to Warrington, hoping that her native air might be of service to her shattered frame. It pleased God to prolong the painful scene for six months, during which the venerable man was unremitting in his offices of piety and affection, supporting her drooping spirits, soothing her distress, and pouring the balm of religious consolation into her heart. She expired on the 7th of March, 1705. His biographer thus describes his deportment on that afflicting occasion. "When he looked for the last time on that countenance which had so often beamed with joy at his approach, and felt the last pulsation of a heart which glowed with affection towards him till it ceased to beat, no murmuring word escaped his lips; but after the example of his Lord and Master in the season of his agony, he looked up to heaven and uttered that memorable prayer, *Thy will be done.*" The merciful and gracious Saviour to whom he looked for support in this trying visitation did not withhold his consolations, as we find evidenced in the devout acknowledgments of the Divine Goodness which flowed from his pen on that occasion. I cannot resist quoting a few lines from his prayers and meditations after the afflicting event. After speaking of her virtues, he says in his prayer: "I bless thy holy Name for these, and all other fruits of thy Holy Spirit: but above all, I most heartily thank the Lord for her piety to him during her health, and for his mercies to her in the time of sickness; for her hearty repentance, steadfast faith in the promises of the Gospel, unfeigned charity, her humble submission to God's

good pleasure, and patient suffering what his hand had laid upon her; for all the spiritual comforts the gracious God did vouchsafe her." The following are among his reflections on the same occasion.

"How good is God, when by his very displeasure we are gainers! He is pleased to exercise me with the loss of my dear wife—an excellent woman, in the very bloom of her years, in the very midst of our satisfactions; and yet, upon a just account, I have no reason to complain, or fret against God, since I have a comfortable assurance, through the merits of Christ, that she is at rest and secure under the custody of the blessed angels, until the great day of recompense: and for myself, though I want her's, yet I do not want the comfort of God's Holy Spirit, whose influence I feel in the cheerful submission of my will to the will of God, in the sorrow for my offences which this affliction hath wrought in me, in purposes of amendment, and in an earnest desire of living so circumspectly in this world, that in the next we may meet in joy, in the bosom of Jesus, when we shall never part, never sorrow more. Even so, blessed Jesus, so let it be."

Bishop Wilson came forth from the furnace of affliction with renewed zeal and vigour. He applied himself more earnestly than ever to the important duties of his office; he was more fervent in prayer, more frequent in preaching, and more abundant in charity. He shewed that he entertained the most sublime conceptions of the virtues and qualifications which become a Christian bishop. He had indeed imbibed the spirit of the purest ages of Christianity; having acquainted himself intimately with the writings of the most distinguished pastors of the primitive church, and formed his own character after the model of its holiest prelates.

It appears from his private papers, that he made his consecration vows the subject of frequent and deep meditation, and that he was fervent in seeking strength to fulfil them. The following comments on select passages of Scripture, taken from his *Sacra Privata*, will shew what were his views of the episcopal office, and what the prevailing desires of his heart and the favourite employments of his life.

"O Sovereign Pastor of souls! renew in thy church, and especially in me, *the spirit of humility* (alluding to Mark x. 44,) that I may serve Thee in the meanest of thy servants. If I lie under the necessity of being served by others, let it be with regret, and let me exact no more than is necessary."

"O my Saviour! I tremble to think how I have followed the example of this slothful servant, (alluding to Luke xix. 20,) and what reason I have to dread his doom: *rest is a crime in one who has promised to labour all the days of his life*. And in me, therefore, it is a great evil not to be always doing good. Pardon me, O God, for what is past; and let me not imagine, that because I am free from gross and scandalous crimes, that therefore I lead a good life."

"God give me a true and prudent humility (alluding to Matt. xx. 26, 27;) to have nothing of the air of secular governors—to attend the flock of Christ as a servant—to look to him as my pattern—to study his conduct and spirit—to spend and be spent for my flock—and that I may never strive to be at ease in plenty, in luxury, repose, and independence. Amen."

"It is God who does all good by the labours of his ministers. To him, therefore, must be all the praise. More sinners are converted by holy than by learned men. In flame my heart, O God, with an earnest love for thy word, and an ardent zeal for thy glory; with a pure and disin-

terested love for thy church, and with a hearty desire of establishing thy kingdom."

The affection of Bishop Wilson for his clergy was strong and uniform. He was attentive to their wants, and laboured incessantly to advance their temporal, spiritual, and eternal interests. He made additions to their glebe, contributed to the repairs and improvements of their houses, and increased their comforts in a variety of ways. There are few even of the present race of clergy in the island, who do not feel the effects of Bishop Wilson's benefactions. He maintained a constant intercourse with them, and encouraged them to apply to him in every difficulty; he assisted them in the prosecution of their studies, he animated them to more vigorous efforts in their ministry, he sympathized with them in distress, and took a hearty concern in all their affairs. They frequently spent days and weeks at his house, and always returned to their own homes (at least it was not his fault if they did not,) happier, wiser, and better. In all their distresses, whether personal, or professional, whether of a private or public nature, they were sure to meet with the best counsels, and the most affectionate consolations, at Bishop's Court. Some of them who have, within these few years, been removed to another world, were accustomed to speak of the venerable Bishop in the glowing language of gratitude and affection, while they recounted his virtues and charities.

From the time the candidates for orders in his diocese first disclosed their intention of devoting themselves to the service of the sanctuary, the good Bishop formed a connexion with them, something similar to that which subsisted between Eli and Samuel. He watched over their conduct, he guided their studies, and directed their pursuits. For a year before their entrance on the sacred ministry, he took them to reside in

his family, that they might be continually under his inspection, and have the benefit of his daily instructions. He recommended to their perusal the best writers in divinity, conversed with them on the subject of personal religion, and both by precept and example, laboured earnestly to render them "able ministers of the New Testament."

Bishop Wilson's repeated admonitions and instructions to his clergy, on the duties of their responsible vocation, were not without effect.—Several of those to whom they were addressed, implicitly followed the plans recommended by him, and were exemplary in their conduct as Christians and ministers. The ascendancy which the Bishop possessed over his clergy, was very great; but it arose, not so much from his rank and station in the church, as from his superior piety, and the interest which he obtained in their affections. Their attachment to him was a mixture of love and veneration. They regarded him as their father and friend; and even some, whose conduct constrained him to exercise a degree of necessary severity towards them, were so fully persuaded of the purity of his motives and the kindness of his intentions, that they felt no sensation of resentment, but through life retained unbounded respect for his memory, and ever spoke of him with the highest gratitude and esteem.

(To be continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IN contrasting the manner in which the doctrines of the Gospel are exhibited in Scripture, with that in which they appear in human systems of divinity, I have sometimes found myself reminded of a conversation which I once heard, between a young man who had speculated in the science of chemistry, and a physician who had spent a long and useful life

in gaining a practical as well as theoretical acquaintance with the healing art. My young friend, whose health had been dilapidated by severe study, was strongly recommended by his medical adviser to pass a few weeks at a celebrated place of public resort, in order to drink the mineral waters which abounded in that Bethesda. The young man, indisposed by the indolence and lassitude arising from his malady for undergoing the bustle and fatigue of a journey, wished to know why he could not have the same medicinal beverage without leaving home. The waters in question, he contended, had been often analyzed, and might be prepared as accurately by his own apothecary, as in the laboratory of nature. "Sir," said the physician, "there are many other points to be taken into your consideration, besides the mere analysis and composition of those medicinal waters. The exercise necessary for your daily attendance at the spring, would be of great service to your health, even if the waters were not intrinsically better than those which have been prepared from my prescription. But such is by no means the fact, for there are certain subtle gases, and perhaps other chemical properties in the native spring, which cannot be easily detected, and much less accurately imitated. Chemistry has not been able to discover any difference between the air in the closest cells of a prison and some which was brought sealed up from one of the purest regions of the world: yet the one was well-known to be highly deleterious, and the other eminently conducive to health. Chemistry can detect but a very trifling difference between a fragment of charcoal and a diamond; yet no efforts have been so successful as to convert the former into the latter. I am not convinced, therefore, that our best imitations of those mineral waters are quite correct; and even were a draught

of the waters themselves to be brought you daily, I think it more than probable that some of their most salutary properties would evaporate in the transportation. You must repair therefore to the spring itself, where alone you can enjoy them in their purity, and their other grateful and refreshing properties."

It will not be necessary to pursue at length the parallel between this case and that which it is brought forward to illustrate. Every reader who possesses any portion of what I may call Christian sensibility of taste, must have been frequently struck with the frigidity of mere doctrinal statements, when compared with the natural, and as it were incidental, manner in which such topics are usually introduced in the Scriptures, not as naked propositions, but as intimately connected with repentance and faith, with love and obedience; with humility and gratitude; in short with all the graces of the Holy Spirit, and all the duties and privileges of the believer.

This idea is so well opened in an excellent tractate* which has just fallen into my hands, that I shall venture to trespass on your pages with an extract, which will, I trust, amply plead its own claim to admission. Mr. Erskine thus states the argument:—

"In the Bible we uniformly find the doctrines, even those that are generally considered most abstruse, pressed upon us as demonstrations or evidences of some important feature of the Divine Mind, and as motives tending to produce in us some corresponding disposition in relation to God or man. This is perfectly reasonable. Our characters cannot but be in some degree affected by what we believe to be the conduct and the will of the Almighty towards ourselves and the rest of our species.

* "Remarks on the internal Evidence for the Truth of revealed Religion; by T. Erskine, Esq. Edinburgh, 1820."

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The history of this conduct and this will constitutes what are called Christian doctrines: if, then, the disposition or character which we are urged to acquire recommend itself to our reasons and consciences, as right and agreeable to the will of God, we cannot but approve that precept as morally true: and if the doctrine by which it is enforced, carries in it a distinct and natural tendency to produce this disposition or character, then we feel ourselves compelled to admit that there is at least a *moral truth* in this doctrine. And if we find that the doctrine has not only this purely moral tendency, but that it is also most singularly adapted to assert and acquire a powerful influence over those principles in our nature to which it directs its appeal, then we must also pronounce that there is a natural truth in the doctrine—or, in other words, that however contradictory it may be to human practice, it has however a natural consistency with the regulating principles of the human mind. And farther, if the doctrine be not only true in morals, and in its natural adaptation to the mind of man, but if the fact which it records coincides also and harmonizes with that general idea of the Divine character which reason forms from the suggestions of conscience, and from an observation of the works and ways of God in the external world, then we are bound to acknowledge that this doctrine appears to be true in its relation to God.

"In the Bible, the Christian doctrines are always stated in this connexion: they stand as indications of the character of God, and as the exciting motives of a corresponding character in man. Forming thus the connecting link between the character of the Creator and the creature, they possess a majesty which it is impossible to despise, and exhibit a form of consistency and truth which it is difficult not to believe. Such is Christianity in the Bible: but in creeds and church articles it is

far otherwise. These tests and summaries originated from the introduction of doctrinal errors and metaphysical speculations into religion; and, in consequence of this, they are not so much intended to be the repositories of truth, as barriers against the encroachment of erroneous opinions. The doctrines contained in them, therefore, are not stated with any reference to their great object in the Bible; the regeneration of the human heart, by the knowledge of the Divine character. They appear as detached propositions, indicating no moral cause, and pointing to no moral effect: they do not look to God, on the one hand, as their source; nor to man, on the other, as the object of their moral urgency. They appear like links severed from the chain to which they belonged, and thus they lose all that evidence which arises from their consistency, and all that dignity which is connected with their high design. I do not speak of the propriety or impropriety of having church articles, but of the evils which spring from receiving impressions of religion exclusively or chiefly from this source."

Mr. Erskine proceeds to instance the ordinary statement of the doctrine of the Trinity, as an illustration of his meaning. "It seems difficult," he remarks, "to conceive that any man should read through the New Testament candidly and attentively, without being convinced that this doctrine is essential to, and implied in, every part of the system. But it is not so difficult to conceive, that although his mind is perfectly satisfied on this point, he may yet, if his religious knowledge is exclusively derived from the Bible, feel a little surprised and staggered, when he for the first time reads the terms in which it is announced in the articles and confessions of all Protestant churches. In these summaries, the doctrine in question is stated by itself, divested of all its Scripture ac-

companiments; and is made to bear simply on the nature of the Divine essence, and the mysterious fact of the existence of Three in One. It is evident, that this fact, taken by itself, cannot in the smallest degree tend to develop the Divine character, and therefore, cannot make any moral impression on our minds. In the Bible, it assumes quite a different shape: it is there subservient to the manifestation of the moral character of God. The doctrine of God's combined justice and mercy in the redemption of sinners, and of his continued spiritual watchfulness over the progress of truth through the world, and in each particular heart, could have been communicated without it, so as to have been distinctly and vividly apprehended: but it is never mentioned except in connexion with these objects; nor is it ever taught as a separate subject of belief. There is a great and important difference between these two modes of statement. In the first, the doctrine stands as an isolated fact, of a strange and unintelligible nature, and is apt even to suggest the idea, that Christianity holds out a premium for believing impossibilities. In the other, it stands indissolubly united with an act of Divine holiness and compassion, which radiates to the heart an appeal of tenderness most intelligible in its nature and object, and most constraining in its influence. The abstract fact, that there is a plurality in the unity of the Godhead, really makes no address either to our understandings, or our feelings, or our consciences. But the obscurity of the doctrine, as far as moral purposes are concerned, is dispelled when it comes in such a form as this—'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.' Or this: 'But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will

send in my name, he shall teach you all things.' Our metaphysical ignorance of the Divine essence is not indeed in the slightest degree removed by this mode of stating the subject: but our moral ignorance of the Divine character is enlightened; and that is the thing with which we have to do. We love or hate our fellow-creatures—we are attracted to or repelled from them—in consequence of our acquaintance with their moral characters; and we do not find ourselves bound from the exercise of these feelings, because the anatomical structure of their frames is unknown to us, or because the mysterious link which binds the soul to the body has baffled all investigation. The knowledge communicated by revelation is a moral knowledge, and it has been communicated in order to produce a moral effect upon our characters; but a knowledge of the Divine essence would have as little bearing upon this object, as far as we can see, as a knowledge of the elementary essence of matter."

I shall give one example more from Mr. Erskine's essay, of the mode in which Divine truth is apt to be perverted by passing through the hands of men.

"The doctrine of the atonement through Jesus Christ, which is the chief corner stone of Christianity, and to which all the other doctrines of revelation are subservient, has had to encounter the misapprehension of the understanding as well as the pride of the heart. This pride is natural to man, and can only be overcome by the power of the truth: but the misapprehension might be removed by the simple process of reading the Bible with attention; because it has arisen from neglecting the record itself, and taking our information from the discourses or the systems of men who have engrafted the metaphysical subtleties of the schools upon the unperplexed state-

ment of the word of God. In order to understand the facts of revelation, we *must* form a system to ourselves; but if any subtilty of which the application is unintelligible to common sense, or uninfluential on conduct, enters into our system, we may be sure that it is a wrong one. The common-sense system of a religion consists in two connexions;—first, the connexion between the doctrines and character of God which they exhibit; and secondly, the connexion between these same doctrines and the character which they are intended to impress on the mind of man. When, therefore, we are considering a religious doctrine, our questions ought to be, 'What view does this doctrine give of the character of God? And what influence will it have on the mind of man?' Now, the Bible tells us, that God so loved the world, as to give his Son for it. He tells us also, that he did this, that he might shew himself just, even when justifying the ungodly; and that he might magnify the law, and make it honourable. The mercy and the holiness of the Divine character, therefore, are the qualities which are exhibited by this doctrine. The effect upon the character of man, produced by the belief of it, will be to love Him who first loved us, and to put the fullest confidence in his goodness and willingness to forgive—to associate sin with the ideas both of the deepest misery and the basest ingratitude—to admire the unsearchable wisdom and the high principle which have combined the fullest mercy with the most uncompromising justice—and to love all our fellow-creatures from the consideration that our common Father has taken such an interest in their welfare, and from the thought, that as we have been all shipwrecked in the same sea, by the same wide-wasting tempest, so we are all invited by the same gracious Voice to take refuge in the same haven of eternal rest."

The consideration of this subject is of great importance to Christian ministers, as it may assist them to discover the most efficacious method of introducing doctrinal points to the notice of mankind. It is not by "vain jangling," by a disputatious philosophy, or even by a strain of pure didactic remark, that men are best built up in their most holy faith. The teachers of religion should take the Scriptures as their model and guide in this as in other respects. The doctrine of the Trinity, we have already seen, is most efficaciously preached by them, when, like the Apostle, they set before men, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost," pointing out the relation which these Divine Persons are pleased to bear to us in the economy of redemption, with all the correlative duties and privileges which flow from the doctrine. The same argument applies to various other principles and precepts of Scripture, which are apt to become cold and barren, when disjoined from their allotted place in the Christian scheme; but have a very different aspect when presented with the vivid associations and practical references which accompany them in the revealed word of God. X. Q.

FAMILY SERMONS. No.—CXLIII.

1 Cor. xiii. 13.—*And now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three; but the greatest of these is Charity.*

In the preceding chapter, St. Paul gives an enumeration of the various spiritual gifts with which at that time the Christian Church was favoured; such as the power of working miracles, speaking with tongues, and prophecy; and these gifts he exhorts them, in the close of the chapter, earnestly to desire. And yet, he adds, I shew unto you a more excellent way—a course, that is to say, still more conducive to

your soul's health here, and to its happiness hereafter. This more excellent way he sets before them in the chapter from which the text has been taken. It is the possession and cultivation of charity, of love to God and man, filling the heart, and influencing the conduct.

In order to establish the value and supreme importance of this grace, St. Paul shews us, that all other graces, and even the most costly sacrifices, are as nothing without it.—"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels;" though I should be able to discourse with the loftiest eloquence, and in every language, of the things of God;—"though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge;"—"though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains;" though I have the power of working the most stupendous miracles;—nay, "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned;" though I should even be a martyr for the faith, and have not charity, have not love as the governing principle of my heart and life;—all these things will "profit me nothing"—without this "I am nothing."

The Apostle then proceeds to describe the nature and effects of this grace, and exhibits a most attractive view of its excellent and amiable properties:—but its highest commendation is to be found in the words of the text, where, after placing it in immediate connexion with faith and hope, he gives the decided preference to charity: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

This verse affords us a compendious view of the characteristic qualities of the true Christian. He is distinguished by the possession of faith, hope, and charity. It is true that his salvation is not to be ascribed to the possession of these graces as its cause. On the contrary, salvation,

by whomsoever attained, is the effect of the free grace and unmerited love of God to man. Still, however, it is no less certain, that whoever is a partaker of this salvation differs essentially from other men; and this difference—namely, the difference between one who is a real Christian and one who is not—is pointed out in the text. The real Christian is actuated by faith, hope, and charity; and though these graces can in no way be considered as deserving heaven, yet are they the means by which God prepares him for it, and without which he can never obtain admission into that blessed place. Bearing this in mind, let us consider these three graces more particularly, and in their order.

1. What is *faith*?—This is a subject which is often discussed, but little understood. The Scriptures throughout give the impression that faith is a matter of the highest moment, and closely connected with all that is important in our relations with God; for, “without faith,” we are expressly told, “it is impossible to please him.” And yet perhaps there is no point on which so many mistakes have been and are now committed. Some regard faith as a mere speculative assent to the facts recorded in Scripture, similar to that which we yield to the statements made in any other well-authenticated history, but as having no more connexion with practice in the one case than in the other. This, however, is to place the revelation of God’s mercy to man on the same footing with the narratives of human strife and contention.—Others again conceive of faith as a mere feeling excited in the mind, they know not how, and not standing on the ground of rational and satisfactory evidence. Some regard it as one of those good works on account of which we are to be justified before God, and as thus in fact procuring our acceptance; a view wholly opposed to the grace of the Gospel; while others

represent it as a confident persuasion of our acceptance independently of any fair scriptural evidence which can be adduced of our being true Christians—a view of the subject which can only be considered as gross enthusiasm, and as directly opposed to the soberness of Divine truth. Faith bears the same meaning in the Bible which it does in the ordinary intercourse of human society: it is the influential belief of testimony; or, according to the Apostle’s own definition, so strong and vivid a perception of the truth and infinite moment of what God has revealed as renders our belief “the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.”

It is impossible to read the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, where the real nature and effects of faith are exhibited by a number of striking examples, without perceiving that it is in the commonly received sense that we are to understand the term faith, as meaning belief. The Bible tells us, that it is by faith—that is, by believing the Gospel—that we become interested in its blessings. When the Gospel is preached, we can perceive that it produces very different effects on different persons. Some derive from it an entirely new view of themselves, of their obligations and relations to God, of their future prospects, and of the necessity of abandoning their sins, and devoting themselves to their Saviour’s service, if they would escape the threatened judgments of God, and inherit eternal life. And why do they do so? Because they really believe the word of God; they perceive the force of its evidence; they feel that its truths regard themselves as well as others; and that their own happiness or misery for time and eternity are involved in the statements and declarations, the threatenings and promises, of Scripture. And feeling this, they act upon their convictions, and there apply for pardon, peace, strength, and salvation, where they

are assured these blessings are to be found. On the other hand, numbers hear the Gospel who are unaffected by it: they remain just as before, attached to the world and its objects, immersed in sinful pursuits, careless about God and his will, indifferent to the future, blindly following their own course, regardless of heaven or hell. Why is this? It is because they do not believe the word of God. They may assent to its truth generally, but they do not embrace it as a thing which concerns themselves. They may admit its declarations to be true, but the admission is partial; it does not apply to their own case. They may believe what passed in the garden of Gethsemane, and on Mount Calvary, as they believe the account of the plague or the great fire in London; but they do not believe their own personal interest concerned in the one more than in the other. But if their faith were genuine, and cordially embraced the whole word of God, they would believe this also; they would believe the absolute necessity in their own case of repentance, conversion of the heart, and newness of life, as well as of earnestly applying to the Saviour for these blessings in the way he has pointed out, if they would escape otherwise certain destruction. But they do not really believe it, and hence their unconcern.

2. We come now to consider the nature of *hope*.—It is a grace closely allied to faith, indeed inseparable from it; and it flourishes in proportion to the strength of faith. Christian hope is the expectation of what God has promised. Believing the truth of his promises, we look for their accomplishment. Now, consider what are the objects of the Christian's hope—an inheritance in heaven, with all its attendant blessings. We hope for this, if we are really serving God in the Gospel of his Son, because God has promised it to such. We believe the promise, and we hope for its fulfilment.

Of this hope some things are stated in Scripture which it will be well for us to bear in mind. We are there told, that "every one that hath this hope purifieth himself even as he is pure;" plainly intimating that such a hope is calculated to give a new and holy direction to our souls, to raise them above the polluting objects of time and sense, and to fix them on high and heavenly objects. And thus will it be. Those who set their desires and affections on things above will no longer value the things of this life, except as they can be made to forward the attainment of their object. Hope thus operates to detach us from all low and debasing pursuits, and to engage us in such only as are elevating and purifying. And if the hope we indulge is not marked by such a character, we may be satisfied that it is unfounded and delusive.

It is also said of this hope, that "it maketh not ashamed:" it disappointeth not. Worldly hopes often end in bitter disappointment; and they generally prove false and delusive. See the worldly man engaged in the pursuit of wealth, or honour, or pleasure. He is animated by hope; but it is by a hope which deludes and disappoints him. Either the object on which he has set his heart is not attained, or, if attained, it yields him none of the satisfaction he had expected. How widely different is this from that hope which maketh not ashamed!

But here it is necessary to remark, that there is a hope which, though it has heaven for its object, is not less delusive than that of the worldling: I mean, the hope which rests on a false foundation. When men who are proceeding in a course of disobedience to the known will of God, yet flatter themselves that all will be well at the last, their condition must be regarded as truly awful. How often do we observe persons viewing their own state and character with complacency, and deriving from their fancied merits a

hope of future happiness, who are plainly condemned by the whole tenor of Scripture! Such a hope as this will perish, like that of the hypocrite. It rests on a false foundation, and must prove fallacious. It has no promise of God to support it, and it must end in disappointment and misery. Not so the hope of the true Christian. It rests on the innumerable promises made in Scripture to the penitent, the believing, the regenerate—to those who have embraced with their whole hearts the salvation purchased for them by the blood of Christ—who have repaired to the fountain there opened, in order to be cleansed from their guilt—and who have sought and obtained the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit to renew them in their Saviour's image, and to enable them to tread in His steps. It will never fail, it will never disappoint them. It is "the hope which maketh not ashamed," because, mark the reason, "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us."

3. But this brings us to consider the third grace here mentioned, *charity*.—That this does not mean merely almsgiving, as some are apt to think, is plain from what is said a few verses before the text. For "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor," "and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Under this mistake as to the real nature of charity, some have applied that passage of St. Peter's First Epistle, "Charity shall cover the multitude of sins," as if there were a merit in almsgiving which would atone for our transgressions; a delusion under which multitudes have lived and died, and to which we owe perhaps many of the most splendid establishments in our own country. But to refute this erroneous notion, it is only necessary to turn to the passage in the Old Testament, from which St. Peter is here quoting: it is Prov. x. 12: "Hatred stirreth up strifes ;

but love covereth all sins;" which plainly shews that it is *love*—the love indeed from which almsgiving ought to spring, but without which almsgiving may be practised—that is here meant. This love is the principle by which the true Christian is actuated towards God and man. It is excited by a sense of the undeserved favours which have been conferred upon him by his heavenly Father; by a sense of the love wherewith he hath loved him in sending his Son to die for him; in seeking him when wandering from peace and happiness; in saving him when lost; in forgiving his sins, healing his spiritual diseases, and filling him with joy and peace in believing. This love, love to God and to our fellow-men for his sake, is stated to be the fulfilling of the law. It comprehends in its very nature the principle of all holy obedience: for if we love God supremely, we must seek to please Him, and to obtain his favour: and this we know is only to be done by conformity to his will. It is also the only satisfactory evidence of a true faith and a well-founded hope. Without it, all pretence to the one or the other is utterly vain, and we are yet in our sins. How much then does it concern us to examine ourselves, to search and try whether we are actuated by that charity which I have described, and without which we have no claim to regard ourselves as Christians!

"And now abideth faith, hope, and charity; but the *greatest* of these is charity." What! greater than faith, which unites us to the Saviour, by which we are justified, and by which we overcome the world? than hope, which raises the believer from earth to heaven, and enables him, even in the depth of a dungeon, to sing praises to God, and to enjoy foretastes of future glory? Yes, it is greater than either. Not only does it prove the reality of these other graces, but it communicates to us a

resemblance to God himself. When the Apostle would give the most endearing and comprehensive view of the perfections of God, what is his language? "God is love." And our Saviour himself tells us, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." All other religions exhibit God as a merciless tyrant. It is the glory of the Gospel to exhibit him as a God of grace and love.

But another reason for the superiority of charity is, that when it shall have attained its full perfection in the heavenly world, no more place will be found for faith and hope.—These cease at the grave of the believer. Then faith becomes sight, and hope enjoyment: and that sight and that enjoyment will but quicken and increase our love, and fill our hearts more completely with gratitude and joy. And throughout the endless ages of eternity we shall continue to grow in this Divine affection, as we learn more of His glories who is the object of it. Faith and hope will then be extinct; but love will continue to flourish in immortal vigour,

For ever blessing, and for ever blest.

And now let us not dismiss this subject from our minds as a matter of general and distant speculation: it concerns us all most nearly. Let us examine ourselves whether we have those necessary marks of the true Christian which have been described; or whether we are among those barren professors of a lifeless and worthless faith, whose hope is delusion, who are destitute of that charity which is the bond of perfectness, of that charity which constitutes the renewal of our souls in the Divine image, and without which no man can see the Lord. Our happiness for ever depends on the result of the inquiry. Let us then pursue it as in the presence of that God who

searches the heart, and with earnest prayer that he would try and prove us. Let us seriously inquire, Have we that faith which, renouncing all other refuges, leads us to place our whole trust in the merits and death of the Saviour for pardon and acceptance with God; that faith which justifies us, which purifies our hearts and inclines us to fulfil his precepts? Have we also that hope which springs from true faith; a hope which has reference, not to earthly possessions, but to blessings unseen and eternal; a hope placed on the basis, not of our own merits, but of God's free mercy in Christ Jesus; that hope by which we are said to be saved, and which is as an anchor to the soul to preserve us from making shipwreck of our faith amidst the storms of the world, and the overwhelming billows of temptation? Have we also any portion of that love which is the crowning grace of the three; without which we can have no scriptural warrant to conclude that our faith is real, or our hope well-founded; that love which disposes us to yield the throne of our affections supremely to God; to obey with a willing mind his commandments; to devote ourselves to his service; and to love all our fellow-creatures with unfeigned charity, and to seek in an especial manner their immortal interests? Then, and then only, may we cherish a humble trust that our faith is not vain, or our hope delusive; and then may we confidently look forward to that blessed state where our affections, now so cold and feeble, shall burst into a brighter flame, and all hearts be forever united in the indissoluble bond of perfect love to God, and to each other. Amen.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I BEG to offer to your notice a thought, which I have presumed to be new, on Matt. iii. 11. The baptism of fire, I suppose to be quite distinct from the baptism of

the Holy Ghost—the latter meaning his various Divine internal operations and influences—the former the severe external visitations with which the new dispensation was to be accompanied, and to which the following verse refers more particularly. With respect to the righteous, these fiery visitations would tend to promote their purification and meetness for heavenly rest and blessedness; and, with respect to the unrighteous, who derive not profit from the dispensation, they would end in the execution of the Saviour's awful sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." This interpretation appears to me to derive strength from Mal. iii. 1, 2. and iv. 1; compare also Matt. xx. 23. This baptism of fire began, on the part of the righteous, with the Saviour's sufferings; and with respect to the unrighteous, there was an awful exemplification and commencement of it at the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. Refer also to 1 Peter i. 7. and to 2 Thess. i. 4—9., as somewhat illustrative of the idea here humbly offered.

I. M. W.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I was much gratified with observing, in your last Number, that two of your correspondents (see the communications of A. B. C. and E. P. S. p. 625) had invited the attention of your readers to the duty of earnest prayer for the nation. The times in which we live are most eventful. On the one hand, the spirit of disunion and irreligion which has manifested itself cannot but excite the most painful fears;—on the other, the successful efforts of various religious and benevolent societies present a pleasing hope that seasons of promised blessedness are yet before us. But, whatever may be the moral or political aspect of the country, the duty of every sincere Christian is obvious. He is to

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follow the Divine precept, "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." He is to aim at maintaining a spirit of unshaken loyalty, to discountenance all disorder and impiety, and to encourage, to his utmost ability, a peaceable subjection to the laws, and a devout reverence to religion. Such is his duty. His hope, however, is fixed upon the Lord his God. It is He alone who can order the unruly affections of sinful men: it is He alone who can effectually bless the pious designs of his servants. I therefore most cordially concur in opinion with your correspondents, that the state of the times peculiarly calls upon the true followers of our Saviour to unite in earnest prayer for the Divine aid; and particularly for the fulfilment of the promise that the Lord will pour out the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. All who are acquainted with the Scriptures know that God has promised a much larger measure of this inestimable gift than has been hitherto vouchsafed: they know also that these promises are to be fulfilled in answer to the prayers of his people: but no adequate attempt has yet been made to direct the prayers of Christians to this important object. The office of the Holy Spirit has by many been rather doctrinally acknowledged, than practically felt:—when, however, it is considered that it is He who must regenerate the soul and create it anew; who must convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that when the enemy comes in like a flood, it is the Spirit of the Lord who is to lift up a standard against him;—that He is the Comforter, Teacher, and Sanctifier of the church;—that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance;—when these and his other gracious offices are borne in mind, the vast benefits which would arise to our country, and to

the world at large, from the fulfilment of the promises of Scripture on this head must be obvious : and the duty of prayer for these blessings be also equally acknowledged. I am anxious, therefore, in common with many other friends of peace—persons sincerely attached to their country, but taking no share in its political movements—to call the attention of Christians of all denominations, especially at this critical moment, to the importance of prayer ; and as it is desirable that union of sentiment should prevail in their petitions, and as some well-disposed persons may not have a suitable form, the following prayer has been written, which may be used either in private or in family devotion.—I am aware that many excellent prayers for the nation have at different times appeared in your pages ; but the following may not be unacceptable, as it is drawn up with a special reference to our present circumstances, and is couched almost entirely in scriptural language, avoiding every expression which might bear the semblance of party-spirit or uncharitable reference.

“ O Lord, our God and heavenly Father, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the bountiful Giver of every good and perfect gift, mercifully regard the prayer of thy servants, who now approach Thee in the name of thy dear Son.

“ We confess, O Lord, that we are sinners ;—that ‘ we, our kings, our princes, and our fathers, have sinned against Thee.’ ‘ To us belongeth confusion of face ; to our kings, to our princes, and to our people ; but to Thee belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Thee.’ We bow before thy footstool ;—we plead the merits of thy blessed Son. For his sake, we beseech Thee, forgive our national, our family, and our individual sins ; have mercy upon us, O Lord ; remember not our iniquities ;

‘ blot out our sins as a cloud, and our transgressions as a thick cloud ;’—say unto us, I have forgiven you. And for thy Name’s sake, O Lord, pour out thy Holy Spirit upon us. ‘ Create in us a new heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us.’

“ We beseech Thee, O Lord, to bestow in an abundant measure the promised blessing of thy Holy Spirit upon our sovereign and all the royal family. May the spirit of wisdom and understanding rest upon all who are in authority over us. Grant, we entreat Thee, heavenly Father, that all bishops and other ministers of religion may be filled with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. May they be men of God, ‘ full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.’

“ Give thy heavenly blessing, O Lord, to all orders and ranks of men amongst us. Preserve us from disunion and disorder. May we be a people fearing God and working righteousness. May we live in dutiful subjection to the king, and in peace and charity one with another.

“ Bless, O Lord, we beseech thee, thy universal church. May ‘ her peace be as a river and her righteousness as the waves of the sea.’ May all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity ‘ endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.’ May they ‘ be of one heart and of one mind ; loving one another with a pure heart fervently.’ We pray for the ‘ spirit of love, and of power, and of a sound mind.’ Hasten the time when all who believe in thy Son’s name may be one, as the Father and the Son are one.—Grant thy people, O Lord, ‘ the spirit of grace and of supplications :’ teach them to ‘ cry mightily unto thee,’ and do Thou hear and answer their prayers.

“ Bless all societies which have been formed, under thy providence, for extending thy kingdom. In all their exertions, enable them to put their entire dependence upon Thee ;

and to remember that Thou hast said, it is 'not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit.' May they give Thee all the glory of whatever success thou shalt be pleased to bestow upon their endeavours. 'Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.'

"O Lord, we desire to feel that we are as nothing before Thee; that our 'days on the earth are as a shadow, and that there is none abiding;' that all things come of Thee; that in thine hand are power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all. O 'that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence;' that Thou wouldst 'convince the world of sin, of righteous-

ness, and of judgment.' May the inhabitants of all lands receive the gift of thy Holy Spirit. May Jew and Gentile be one fold under one Shepherd. 'May the whole earth be filled with thy glory.' May 'every knee bow to the name of Jesus, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'

"Almighty and most merciful Father, for thy Son's sake, hear, we beseech Thee, these our prayers. 'We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O our God,' and for the sake of thy Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; in whose most blessed name, and perfect form of words, we further call upon Thee, saying—

"Our Father which art in heaven," &c.

MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

As I am given to understand that the pages of the Christian Observer are not shut against the petitions of poor unfortunate individuals like myself, I take the liberty of introducing to your notice a part of my domestic history, hoping that I may thus obtain redress for some of the grievances under which I labour.

I am the youngest of seven brothers, belonging to an ancient and highly respectable family. At present we are chiefly known by a set of *nicknames*, which we had the misfortune to acquire in our travels through a pagan country, where we were forced to worship certain idols, by whose names we have ever since been known. A few well-behaved persons have indeed attempted to

do us more justice, by simply calling us first brother, second brother, &c. according to our ages: but their example has not been generally followed; and, to say the truth, we are not very particular on the subject, as the aforesaid names have, by long usage, become so familiar, that they convey no intentional disrespect, and seldom remind the hearer of their pagan origin. Many sovereigns, and other persons eminent in history, are distinguished chiefly by their nicknames, as the Great, the Fair, the Bald, the Impudent,* so that we do not feel ourselves particularly entitled to complain. I must, however, beg your readers will not confound us with ten rascally fellows

* Emma, daughter of Charlemagne.

who a few years since pretended to our acquaintance, and obtruded themselves on the French Republic in our place. I could tell you many sad tales of that atheistical Decemviri; but as they are now justly sent into banishment, I shall not recall the memory of their atrocities.

And now, sir, you shall hear, in few words, the story of my misfortunes. I have already mentioned that I am the youngest of the family; yet, in many respects, I was considered the most illustrious. I was born at a moment of universal peace and repose, when all nature was order and harmony and perfection. My armorial bearings were peculiarly splendid; namely, a terrestrial globe, in the expanse of heaven, surrounded by stars, and under it the motto, *Creavit; Perfecit; Quievit; Consecravit*. My birth day was considered an important era in the family, and was celebrated with peculiar solemnities. No person, who pretended to decency of conduct, thought of doing any thing on that festival but what comported with its dignity; and at one time so strictly was it observed, that any one who had ventured to attend to the ordinary affairs of business on that occasion would have met with severe punishment. Nothing could be more imposing than the spectacle presented at those happy seasons; when, forgetting the cares and vicissitudes of life, my numerous friends devoted themselves to hallowed rites, and every heart was elevated in sacred contemplations.

At length, however, circumstances, which it is not necessary to mention on the present occasion, but which were perfectly satisfactory to every considerate observer, rendered it proper to transfer this great festival from my birth-day to that of my eldest brother. From that time my slavery began. I am now the drudge of the whole family, and my presence is the signal for all kinds of indigni-

ties. So universally am I hated, that young and old, rich and poor, masters and servants, would be glad, I fear, as matters now stand, to blot my birth-day from their calendar. Many who wear decent apparel when they visit my brothers delight in insulting me with rags and filth. I am made to work more hours in the day than any other branch of the family; and am frequently abused because I cannot do all that is laid upon me. I seldom have a farthing in my pocket, and am usually obliged to eat my dinner upon credit. But what pains me most is, that I am compelled to tell lies for all the family. It is fearful to think of the vows and obligations which are imposed upon me, and which were never intended to be fulfilled when they were made. To various classes of tradesmen, I am the unwilling cause of much trouble, and oftentimes I fear of some guilt; for they are so much in the habit of promising, and their customers of requiring of me, more than I could get through if I had half a score pair of hands to work with, that I seldom retire to rest without innumerable broken promises and execrations upon my head. And what is another most serious evil is, that I am obliged to sit up so late at night, that I am scarcely in bed before it is time to begin celebrating my eldest brother's birth-day; and with what heart that can be done, after the scene I have been describing, I will leave your readers to judge. And what is as great a grievance as any I have mentioned is, that I seldom get any wages till late at night; so that I am often obliged to retire either supperless or in debt to bed; and my eldest brother bitterly complains, that in consequence of my late hours, he is grossly insulted as he takes his morning rounds, by disrespectful shopkeepers and their customers, who, forgetting his dignity, threaten to kick him out of the street and

market-place, and to confine his range to his own private apartments, or to edifices built especially to his honour. Could nothing be done by a humane legislature, or by a general agreement among well-disposed persons, to remedy these serious evils?

But not to be so ill-mannered as to dwell longer on my own case, I shall proceed to mention the circumstances of my brothers.

The eldest, as you will have inferred, is a highly respectable and religious personage; at least he was so at one time, but his habits, I grieve to say, are in many instances, changed for the worse. Notwithstanding his avocations are far more important than those of any of us, he has acquired a wretched habit of spending his mornings in bed, as if the hours hung so heavily on his hands that he was glad to curtail them in their prime. Not content with this, he is frequently seen loitering in public-houses or tea-gardens; or spending the best part of his day in country excursions or dinner parties. I am glad, however, to say he does not generally play at cards, or frequent the theatre, at least when he is at home; for when he makes a trip to the continent, he too often gives up all scruples of this kind. I have even seen him singing and fiddling on the Boulevards of Paris, to the great distress of all who venerate his character.

But one of the worst of his propensities—which, however, I should add, is but of recent date, and may therefore, I hope, yet be restrained—is to devote a great part of his time to reading seditious newspapers. This habit, as you may well suppose, interferes greatly with his important engagements: indeed, it unfits him for every duty; it sours and perverts his mind, and cannot fail, unless speedily stopped, to render him a nuisance to society. The radical party begin already to claim him as their friend; and I fear he will soon become so unless he can

be induced to give up this wretched practice, and to devote his hours, as he used to do, to the duties which become his character and station. I wish, sir, I could portray him to you as he appeared in his better days: it would have done your heart good to have seen him in his old-fashioned but not unbecoming suit, attended by a virtuous train of youths and maidens, who forgot the restraints imposed by his venerable presence for the sake of the solid happiness which he was accustomed to inspire among those who frequented his society. For though he was never seen to laugh, yet there dwelt a peaceful smile on his brow, while with his heavenly discourses he melted the soul into a holy calm. Being exempted from toilsome avocations, he always appeared cheerful in his demeanour, and at leisure for instructive intercourse. He was the comfort of the aged, whose declining years he soothed by his tranquil smile; nor less the friend of youth, whom he instructed in the duties and prepared for the trials of life. In short, I should write a volume, instead of a letter, if I attempted to enumerate all his excellences, and to point out the claims which, when he conducts himself aright, he still possesses on the respect and gratitude of society.

But this newspaper-business distresses me greatly; and unless something can be done to restrain the evil, I fear my revered relative will go far to lose all that once rendered him a blessing to society. An application was lately made to the principal gentlemen in the village, most of whom, it was hoped, were his staunch friends, to prevent the news-venders supplying him with their deleterious wares; but, I grieve to say, hitherto without effect. Some of the news-venders themselves having no rest nor peace all the year round since he has taken it into his head to plague them at times when they wish their shops to be shut,

requested the above-mentioned assembly to take their case into consideration ; but nothing has yet been done.*

* Indeed, to drop the allegory, I had almost said *worse* than nothing, if we may judge from the manner in which the petitions presented by Lord Kenyon in the House of Lords, and Mr. Courtenay in the House of Commons, were received by certain members. I copy the following paragraph from the newspapers of the day.

"Mr. Lambton could not but feel the greatest disgust at the hypocritical cant which this petition contained. For the petitioners to declare that the circulation of Sunday newspapers prevented them from attending the sacred duties of religion was the most extraordinary assertion he had ever heard. He would never, in his place in that House, hear accusations of this kind made against Sunday newspapers without repelling them. Most of those publications were so carried on as to promote moral as well as political information. He knew of none that taught seditious doctrine ; and he conceived, if the petitioners studied to amend their lives at home, instead of attacking the conductors of those publications, their conduct would be far more consonant with the principles of the Christian religion."

The "hypocritical cant" of the news-vender's petition is not, I think, easy to discover ; or even if the men be hypocrites, their argument is sound. Let your readers judge for themselves. They stated as follows :—

"That many of your petitioners, unwilling to live by the perpetual breach of the Sabbath, and in the practice and promotion of immorality, have made great pecuniary sacrifices, rather than engage in a traffic so inconsistent with Christian principles, and so disgraceful to a Christian country : while as to others of the petitioners, their circumstances unhappily forbid their rejecting so considerable a portion of the news-business, and throwing it into the hands of others who feel no such scruples. At the same time, it is with the utmost reluctance, that your petitioners engage in an occupation, which not only necessarily prevents their attendance on the public services of the church, but more than usually fatigues their bodies and minds on that sa-

I should add, that my eldest brother was not drawn into this vile habit without many previous scruples of conscience, to overcome

cred day which is especially appointed as a day of rest ; and obliges them to employ upon it a number of extra hands in the distribution of the Sunday papers.

"Your petitioners also beg leave, in addition, to state their full impression and belief, that the publication of Sunday papers has a decided tendency to injure and deprave the public morals, not only as respects the profanation of the day in the employment of printers and newsmen, and in the temptation thus afforded to multitudes of readers, to absent themselves from public worship, and to frequent public houses ; but also in consequence of many of such papers giving currency to principles which are manifestly disloyal, seditious, and profane, without the possibility of your petitioners exercising any discrimination in their distribution."

Now, sir, I see no hypocrisy in persons wishing to relinquish a part of their profits, or in asking the legislature to enable them to keep its laws. But be this as it may, if Sunday papers were of any assignable benefit to morals or religion, there might be some excuse for retaining them. Yet even in that most favourable of cases, and supposing them to be as loyal and moral as they are generally otherwise, who would assert that a delay of twenty-four hours in communicating their information would be any public injury ? If revenue, as I fear, is the main object of consideration, it is surely most pitiful to weigh a few thousand groats of stamp-duty against the impiety of the practice, and its deeply injurious effects upon society. Mr. Lambton, it seems, thinks it "the most extraordinary assertion he ever heard," that men "cannot attend the sacred duties of religion," while they are running up and down the streets blowing horns and delivering newspapers on the day which God has commanded to be kept holy. What the honourable gentleman's ideas of "sacred duties" may be I am yet to learn ; as well as what is the valuable "moral and political information," contained in such publications as *Thellwall's Champion*, *Hunt's Examiner*, or *Wooler's Gazette*.

I shall close this protracted note with

which a variety of artifices were employed by those who seduced him into the practice. At first a short moral essay was made the bait; but it being soon found, that in the hurry of affairs this was generally neglected, it was speedily discontinued.—One editor, good man, gave the church lessons in his “Weekly Messenger;” whether that my brother

the following apposite remarks from a newspaper editor.

“A noble lord is witty on the poor newsmen, and thinks they should have petitioned against Monday papers—that is, his lordship thinks the newsmen meant to complain of the hardship of distributing Monday papers on the Sunday, the day before they are published. But a word on Monday papers. It is very true, that most, if not all, Monday morning papers are prepared on the Sunday; but it is equally true, that there is no occasion for this, and that it is a wanton breach of the Sabbath; for there are surely as many hours on the Saturday to prepare a paper for Monday, as there are on the Friday to prepare one for Saturday; but the excuse for this is, that they may include the latest news of the Sunday papers; so that, in fact, the Sunday papers have the double guilt to answer for, of breaking the Sabbath themselves, and occasioning the printers of Monday papers to do the same.

“But to come to the main point in question—Christianity is either true or false.—If true, the Christian Sabbath is an integral and essential part of that system, and ought unquestionably to be observed. If Christianity (as Paine and Co. tell us) be not true, then repeal all the statutes which enforce and protect it; or if (as our judges say) ‘Christianity is part and parcel of the common law,’ separate them, and abolish the former forever. But let not heaven be mocked with laws to enjoin the Christian Sabbath, and royal proclamations to enforce these laws, while at the same time it is allowed to be profaned in the most open and wanton manner. Away with the prohibitions of selling meat and bread on the Sunday, while the gin-shops are set open at the corner of every street, and every petty pamphlet shop is placarded all over with the Sunday papers! What folly to talk of suppressing vice and profaneness, while both are thus exhibited and recommended to our view! Here, indeed, is ‘cant and hypocrisy’ with a witness.”

might take his paper to church as more portable than a Bible and prayer-book, or that he might save himself the trouble of going there at all, I leave your readers to determine.

But it is time to proceed to my other brothers, whose characters I must sum up in a very few words, having detained you longer than I had intended with my own history and that of the eldest of our family; whose arms, I should have added, are a globe half illumined and half in shadow, with the motto, *Esto lux, lux fuit*.

My second brother used to bear an excellent character for diligence and sobriety. His birth-day immediately following that of our eldest brother, he was accustomed after the festival to rise early in the morning, refreshed with the salutary relaxation of the preceding day, and to betake himself to business with a light head and cheerful heart. I am grieved, however, to state, that of late years, especially when he happens to be residing in manufacturing towns, he has taken to very indolent and disgraceful habits. He can seldom be induced to work, and generally robs me of half my wages to pay for his idleness and self-indulgence. He is much subject to head-aches, and often spends great part of his time in public-houses. He got into a way last year of attending radical meetings, which were generally contrived so as to suit his convenience. In consequence of his thus neglecting his affairs, and keeping perpetual holiday, the mechanics with whom he carouses have whimsically styled him by the title of Saint; a title which he very little deserves, by any good he does to the community.—Could nothing be devised to break him of the injurious habit which I have described? I should think that, in many instances, his employers might make a compact to get him out of these idle practices, which would be of great advantage both to himself and all the family. His arms

are, The sky, azure, resting on the ocean and canopied by humid clouds: his motto is, *Esto expansum*.

My third brother's achievement is, A field verdant, surrounded by trees in full foliage, with the inscription, *Herbescat terra herbulas*. He is, upon the whole, a person of respectable habits, and has nearly left off some brutal sports to which he was once addicted at particular seasons; such as cock-fighting, goose-hunting, &c. He still keeps up the custom of an annual feast—not fast—of fritters or pancakes.

My fourth brother was once esteemed a particularly devout and exemplary person; but he has of late years greatly relaxed in his good habits, and seldom attends church. He used to be very regular in fasting, but at present satisfies his conscience by eating salt-fish and egg-sauce once a-year. I have, however, no particular fault to find with his general character, except the hypocrisy of suffering the church bells to ring for the sake of keeping up his pretensions to sanctity, when he seldom enters the doors. He has of late been very constant in his attentions at Brandenburgh House, and the turnpike keepers say they gained many hundred pounds by him. His arms are, The sun, moon, and stars; with the motto, *Sunto luminaria in expanso*.

I shall pass over my fifth brother's character with a very brief statement. He is a remarkably charitable personage, being accustomed once a year to distribute alms to all the poor in the village. He is fond of land-surveying, and is very exact in keeping up the bounds and land-marks of the parish. I wish he gave more moderate dinners to churchwardens and vestrymen on those occasions.—His arms are, A bird *volant*, and a fish, *natant*; his motto, *Implete aquas, aera, terram*.

The remarks which I have made respecting my fourth brother, will

apply to my sixth, who has relaxed much of late years in his religious habits. Could not you, Mr. Editor, or some of your friends, persuade him to be more attentive than of late he has been, in observing an annual solemnity, which he once kept with great devotion, but which, I am sorry to say, has almost degenerated into a mere form, and in which his cook often takes more share than himself. Pray think whether something could not be done to restore that anniversary to its original utility; it has sadly fallen into neglect. His arms, I should add, are Adam and Eve in Paradise; with the motto, *Ecce omnia bona*.

Such are briefly the character and history of our illustrious family. I could relate many other particulars, but have not time, being, as I told you, always much engaged, and at this moment labouring under a severe cold, from sitting in a newly scoured parlour with the carpet taken up.—Excuse mistakes, as I am writing behind the counter in a shop full of ladies, choosing lace and feathers to exhibit on my eldest brother's birthday, and amidst the clatter of mops, brooms, and brushes, which pursue me wherever I turn, beginning before I am out of bed in the morning, and scarcely ceasing when I retire at night.—I am, sir, your oppressed and disconsolate servant,

SATURDAY.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I HAVE been often led, in perusing the page of biography, to contrast the pharisaic and inefficient consolations which it is too customary to employ for the support of dying persons, with the sincere, manly, and Christian language which becomes such occasions. How few dare to act openly with a dying friend! How few duly feel the im-

portance of turning the thoughts of the sufferer into the Christian track of penitence, self-renunciation, and simple trust in the death and merits of the Saviour; instead of urging him to build his hopes on his past virtues, and to weave around him the flimsy robe of self-righteousness. I am reminded of the subject (which, however, I have more than once thought of introducing to your readers) by lately perusing the account of the conversation of Sir Walter Raleigh with Dr. Tounson, as related in the additions to Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, by Mr. Bliss. It is as follows:—

“Dr. Tounson, Dean of Westminster, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, has given a relation of this (Sir Walter Raleigh's) execution, in a letter to Sir John Isham, of Lamport, in Northamptonshire.

“‘He was,’ says the Dean, ‘the most fearless of death that ever was known, and the most resolute and confident, yet with reverence and conscience. When I began to encourage him against the fear of death, he seemed to make so slight of it that I wondered at him. And when I told him that the dear servants of God, in better causes than his, had shrunk back, and trembled a little, he denied not; but yet gave God thanks he never feared death, and much less then; for it was but an opinion and imagination; and the manner of death, though to others it might seem grievous, yet he had rather die so than of a burning fever. With much more to that purpose, with such confidence and cheerfulness, that I was fain to divert my speech any other way, and wished him not to flatter himself; for this extraordinary boldness I was afraid came from some false ground. *If it sprang from the assurance he had of*

the love and favour of God, of the hope of his salvation by Christ, and his own innocence as to the particular crime laid to his charge, as he pleaded, I said he was a happy man. But if it were a humour of vain glory, or carelessness or contempt of death, or senselessness of his own estate, he were much to be lamented, &c. For I told him, that heathen men had set as little by their lives as he would do, and seemed to die as bravely. He answered, that *he was persuaded, that no man that knew God, and feared him, could die with cheerfulness and courage, except he were assured of the love and favour of God unto him. That other men might make shows outwardly, but they felt no joys within; with much more to that effect, very Christianly, so that he satisfied me then, as I think he did all his spectators at his death.*”

No truth can be more incontrovertible, than that contained in Raleigh's reply, that for a man who knows the character of God, and fears him, there is but *one* source of support in death, an assurance—not a mystical but a well-founded scriptural assurance—of God's love and favour to him, grounded, as Dr. Tounson observes, on “the hope of salvation by Christ.”—Most of your readers will recall to mind Mrs. H. More's admirable remarks on falsely “happy deaths;” I wish some of your correspondents, adequate to the subject, would pursue it at large. There is no topic of Christian casuistry which stands more in need of elucidation, than the right mode of conducting death-bed visits; and I should rejoice to see the topic discussed in your pages with such practical advice as the reading and experience of your correspondents may suggest.

E.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Life of Wesley, and the Rise and Progress of Methodism. By ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq., Poet Laureat, &c. 2 vols. 8vo. London: 1820. pp. 512 and 654.

It is difficult to say how often, since the first publication of the work before us, we have heard the question proposed, "What could induce the author to write it?" At this our surprise has been great; because, even previous to our perusal of the work itself, no question appeared to us to admit of an easier and more satisfactory solution. The reasons are numerous and cogent which might prevail upon any intellectual, patriotic, or pious man, to enquire into the history or state of Methodism in this country. That system appears to have grown so rapidly, and yet to be established so firmly, that, if no other circumstance gave importance to the enquiry, a philosophical mind like Mr. Southey's would at once be arrested by its capacities of expansion and endurance, and would be disposed to apply itself to the investigation of so vigorous and gigantic an institution. But Methodism is not less a subject of legitimate curiosity to the patriot than to the speculative philosopher. Can we see, perhaps, some hundreds of thousands of our countrymen, either linked in close and intimate connexion with so well organized and influential a body of instructors as that of the Methodists, or submitted to their casual but stirring lessons, without feeling a strong desire to estimate the probable effects of such conjunctions? When, however, to all this, is added the consideration, that Methodism is no mere collection of human dogmas, no mere body of artificial sentiments—though doubtless its rules are admirably contrived for perpetuating and enlarging its influence—but that it

is, strictly speaking, a religious system, not only embracing, but founding itself upon, all those grand principles which characterize the Gospel of Christ; and that it thus touches all the deep and secret springs of the will and the affections which set the moral machine in motion; he must be ill-acquainted with the history of human nature, who does not consider an investigation of this system to be of the highest importance to the interests of truth, and the well being of the community.

We see no necessity, therefore, for resorting to those lower or baser motives for engaging in this work, which, we regret to say, have been so prodigally and improperly charged upon Mr. Southey;—such as, a desire, in the first place, to suit the book market; then, to raise a laugh at the expense of serious religion—to exalt the church by calumniating her supposed enemies—to wound the more pious part of the Establishment through the sides of Methodism, and even to light the fires of persecution against them. All these motives, Mr. Southey himself would, without doubt, indignantly repel, and from all of them, even if we had no guarantee in our general knowledge of his character and writings, we ourselves should have been disposed to acquit him, especially as we should have been able to discover a sufficient ground for his present undertaking, without having recourse to such ungenerous imputations.

But still we are compelled to own, that, *after* the perusal of the work itself, we feel ourselves unable to decide with precision as to the specific *object* which the author had in view. Combined with the talent which is sure to be found in any production of Mr. Southey's, there is a character of indistinctness and

contrariety in many parts of this, which is by no means a common feature in his writings. This circumstance perplexes us. A clear design is apt to give a clear character to a work, and a perplexed design a character of confusion. After all, therefore, it may be wisest for us not to attempt to settle that which the author may not have settled for himself.

The considerations, however, which may have induced Mr. Southey to compose the work, are of comparatively little importance. The question of real consequence is, "What is likely to be the effect of it?" And in order better to judge of this, we shall think it right to attend the author, almost step by step, through his arduous and often interesting career, noticing especially those parts of his volumes which appear to us to call either for the censure or commendation of the reader.

Before, however, we enter on this undertaking, there are two points on which we shall think it right to offer a few observations: first, on the necessity for a new book on the subject of Methodism, notwithstanding the many already in existence; and secondly, on the extent of Mr. Southey's qualifications to become its author.

As to the *first* of these points, it may be confidently said, that all the preceding works on this subject, with perhaps a single exception, were little better than *ex parte* statements. A collection of the essays and treatises, long and short, from friends, enemies, and neutrals, on this subject, would form a very curious miscellany. In one, we have a self-called "unbiassed biographer," whose own reputation is altogether identified with the reputation of the people he describes. In another case, we are called to listen to some apostate from the cause of Methodism, justifying his desertion to a new standard by the abuse of his old fel-

low-soldiers. In a third case, we are amused by a fanciful parallel, executed by episcopal hands, between two things about as like as fire and ice—Methodism and Popery. After this, we have some brain-sick enthusiast, for whom the strange ravings of some of the early Methodists are scarcely wild enough; then, a self-called orthodox churchman, in whose eyes the very excellencies of Methodism are among its greatest crimes; then, an ultra-Arminian, who forgives all its follies, for the sake of its antipathy to Calvinism; then, an ultra-Calvinist, who measures his zeal for Christ by his hostility to John Wesley. In short, Methodism is of so positive and pungent a nature; it speaks such plain language; its doctrines stand out with so little of shade and relief; it walks abroad so thoroughly unveiled; it makes such powerful appeals to the passions, and treats with so little ceremony what is old and established in opinion and practice merely because it is so; that it has made almost every man its friend or its enemy, and has dipped the pen of most previous writers on the subject, up to the very shaft, either in honey or in gall. It cannot, therefore, be doubted, that in order to present any just conception of Methodism, it must be sketched by a new pencil. It needed some cool and steady hand to weigh its merits and demerits; to seize the scales from the struggling grasp of friends and foes; to cast out every expedient which ought not to be weighed in by either party, and honestly to strike the balance between them.

As to the second point—namely, how far Mr. Southey is qualified for the discharge of this his very difficult and delicate office—we think it fair to set out by saying, that the work every where indicates the great assiduity and perseverance as well as talents of its author. It is one of the distinguishing properties of Mr. Southey's mind, that he exerts him-

self with a well-directed industry of research, beyond almost any writer, to collect every thing which bears on his undertaking. He lays the whole world of letters under contribution for facts, images, and arguments, until every magazine of information is utterly exhausted. It is not our intention, however, in thus saying, to affirm that, after all, Mr. Southey is in this instance thoroughly acquainted with his subject. But if he is not, the fault is not to be charged upon indolence or carelessness. A due appreciation of the character of Methodism appears to us to depend upon certain other causes, which ought always, indeed, to be associated with industry and vigilance, but by no means to be identified with them. This, however, may confidently be affirmed, that Mr. Southey has brought together a larger and a better assemblage of facts than any former labourer in the same field. And, with this observation, we will sum up, for the present, what we have to say of him as a biographer, only adding, that, such being the deficiency in this department of literature and theology, and such the spirit of industry and research which this intelligent writer has brought to the undertaking, the work is and must be entitled to close attention. We are not sure that, in our analysis of it, or in our farther observations upon it, we shall win the thanks either of the author, or of the body whose history and constitution he examines; but as far as candour is concerned, we will endeavour to deserve the approbation of both. Our readers will not, we think, be displeased with us for extracting largely from two of the most entertaining volumes we ever remember to have read, especially as it will enable us to lay before them a succinct history of Methodism.

The first chapter in the work is occupied with an account of Mr.

Wesley's family. There is, in addition to much genuine piety, a certain sturdiness and energy in the character of both of his immediate progenitors, which harmonize well with our abstract ideas of the parents of such a child. And to his mother's fostering hand especially may be traced, under the Divine blessing, many of the more remarkable features of piety in the character of her son. The following letter, written by his mother as an apology to her husband, who was absent at the convocation, for assembling the poor of his village, in order to pray with them, and to read a sermon to them, would not have been unworthy of Wesley himself.

“As to its *looking particular*,” she said, “I grant it does; and so does almost every thing that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God, or the salvation of souls, if it be performed out of a pulpit or in the way of common conversation; because in our corrupt age the utmost care and diligence has been used to banish all discourse of God, or spiritual concerns, out of society, as if religion were never to appear out of the closet, and we were to be ashamed of nothing so much as of confessing ourselves to be Christians.” To the objection on account of her sex she answered, that as she was a woman, so was she also mistress of a large family; and though the superior charge lay upon him as their head and minister, yet in his absence she could not but look upon every soul which he had left under her care, as a talent committed to her under a trust by the great Lord of all the families of heaven and earth. “If,” she added, “I am unfaithful to Him or to you, in neglecting to improve these talents, how shall I answer unto Him when he shall command me to render an account of my stewardship?” The objections which arose from his own station and character she left entirely to his own judgment. Why any person should reflect upon him, because his wife endeavoured to draw people to church, and restrain them, by reading and other persuasions, from profaning the Sabbath, she could not conceive; and if any were mad enough to do so, she hoped he would not regard it. “For my own part,” she says, “I value no censure on this account: I have long

since shook hands with the world; and I heartily wish I had never given them more reason to speak against me.' As to the proposal of letting some other person read for her, she thought her husband had not considered what a people they were; not a man among them could read a sermon, without spelling a good part of it, and how would that edify the rest? And none of her own family had voices strong enough to be heard by so many." Vol. I. pp. 16, 17.

The influence of such a mother was sure to be considerable upon the mind of a son. And we notice the labours of the parent in connexion with the piety of the child, in the hope of stimulating to like vigilance those parents who are shrinking from their duty, and of encouraging others who are heartily, though it may be with no very flattering prospects, engaged in it.

We find, in this chapter, a singular account of some alleged preternatural noises, and other strange phenomena, in the Wesley family, to which the author subjoins the following observations.

"Dr. Priestley observes in favour of the story, 'that all the parties seem to have been sufficiently void of fear, and also free from credulity, except the general belief that such things were supernatural.' But he argues, that where no good end was to be answered, we may safely conclude that no miracle was wrought; and he supposes, as the most probable solution, that it was a trick of the servants, assisted by some of the neighbours, for the sake of amusing themselves and puzzling the family. In reply to this it may safely be asserted, that many of the circumstances cannot be explained by any such supposition, nor by any legerdemain, nor by ventriloquism, nor by any secret of acoustics. The former argument would be valid, if the term miracle were applicable to the case; but by miracle Dr. Priestley evidently intends a manifestation of Divine power, and in the present instance no such manifestation is supposed, any more than in the appearance of a departed spirit. Such things may be preternatural and yet not miraculous: they may be not in the ordinary course of nature, and yet imply no

alteration of its laws. And with regard to the good end which they may be supposed to answer, it would be end sufficient if sometimes one of those unhappy persons who, looking through the dim glass of infidelity, see nothing beyond this life, and the narrow sphere of mortal existence, should, from the well-established truth of one such story, (trifling and objectless as it might otherwise appear,) be led to a conclusion that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy." Vol. I. pp. 26, 27.

These remarks do not quite satisfy us. That which is "not in the ordinary course of nature" implies at least a temporary "alteration of its laws." And it is to us not more incredible that the Divine Being should, for his own wise purposes, in any given case, alter what we call his laws, than that he should suspend them. The question, in every such case, is the measure of evidence by which the facts are sustained, and the possibility of accounting for them by natural causes. We certainly have as yet heard of few instances of the kind which could not be solved without a miracle. The case in question we could almost suspect was a trick of some Non-juror to frighten Mr. Wesley out of his recognition of King George the First, or at least to prevent his praying for him in his family. "Old Jeffrey," the name given to this strange visitant, always began his clamour when Mr. Wesley was praying for the king and prince. At the same time Mr. Southey is, we think, perfectly right in maintaining that the object of establishing the existence of a spiritual world might be abundantly sufficient to account for the appearance of a spirit; though at the same time we should be backward to admit that he had vouchsafed such evidence after our Lord's own declaration, that "if men believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead."

In the second chapter we are intro-

duced to Mr. Wesley at Oxford. On his arrival at the usual period for taking orders, his parents entertained some difference of opinion as to the propriety of his immediately entering on the ministerial office. The father feelingly describes his own state at that period of his life. "You see," said the aged man, "that time has shaken me by the hand, and death is but a little way behind him. My eyes and heart are now almost all I have left, and I bless God for them." He recommends his son to delay entering upon so awful a charge. The mother viewed the matter differently, and thus addresses him :—

" 'And now,' said she, 'in good earnest resolve to make religion the business of your life; for, after all, that is the one thing that, strictly speaking, is necessary; all things beside are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I heartily wish you would now enter upon a strict examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. If you have, the satisfaction of knowing it will abundantly reward your pains; if you have not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears than can be met with in a tragedy.' " Vol. I. pp. 31, 32.

Soon after this we find him much affected by reading the "*de Imitatione Christi*" of Thomas a Kempis. In this state his mother sent him the following short rules respecting worldly amusements—rules which all our readers, we think, will do well to consider and remember.

" 'Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure,' she said, 'take this rule :—whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things;—in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself.' " Vol. I. p. 33.

How truly valuable also are her remarks upon another subject! May

those of our young university friends who are venturing on the temptations of general society, confiding in the strength of their own resolutions, read and value them!

" 'If,' said she, 'it be a weak virtue that cannot bear being laughed at, I am sure it is a strong and well-confirmed virtue that can stand the test of a brisk buffoonery. Many people, though well inclined, have yet made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, merely because they could not bear raillery. I would therefore advise those who are in the beginning of a Christian course, to shun the company of profane wits, as they would the plague or poverty; and never to contract an intimacy with any but such as have a good sense of religion.' " Vol. I. p. 39.

Wesley's own observations on the same subject, sixty years after, are no less entitled to attention.

" 'When it pleased God,' he says, 'to give me a settled resolution to be not a nominal, but a real Christian, (being then about twenty-two years of age,) my acquaintance were as ignorant of God as myself. But there was this difference: I knew my own ignorance; they did not know theirs. I faintly endeavoured to help them, but in vain. Mean time I found, by sad experience, that even their harmless conversation, so called, damped all my good resolutions. But how to get rid of them was the question which I revolved in my mind again and again. I saw no possible way, unless it should please God to remove me to another college. He did so, in a manner utterly contrary to all human probability: I was elected fellow of a college where I knew not one person. I foresaw abundance of people would come to see me, either out of friendship, civility, or curiosity, and that I should have offers of acquaintance new and old; but I had now fixed my plan. Entering now, as it were into a new world, I resolved to have no acquaintance by chance, but by choice, and to choose such only as I had reason to believe would help me on my way to heaven. In consequence of this, I narrowly observed the temper and behaviour of all that visited me. I saw no reason to think that the greater part of these truly loved or feared God. Such acquaintance, therefore, I did not choose: I could not expect they would

do me any good. Therefore, when any of these came, I behaved as courteously as I could: but to the question, "When will you come to see me?" I returned no answer. When they had come a few times, and found I still declined returning the visit, I saw them no more. And I bless God, he adds, 'this has been my invariable rule for about three score years. I knew many reflections would follow; but that did not move me, as I knew full well it was my calling to go through evil report and good report.' Vol. I. pp. 40, 41.

During the period which he spent in Lincoln college, after taking his degree, he was appointed moderator for college examinations. This office he long exercised; and to this circumstance he attributes, and probably with much justice, his own clearness, quickness, and logical acuteness—qualities in which, as a writer, he has, we think, had few superiors. It is one of the errors of education, that sufficient pains are not taken to communicate the faculty of separating truth from error; of seizing the leading features of a question; of accustoming the mind to definition; and enabling men to think clearly, without which there can be no hope of their writing clearly. Many powerful intellects have to struggle with the effects of a bad education, as to these points, through the whole of their career. Wesley's works, with all their deficiencies, often supply some of the finest examples with which we are acquainted of clear thinking and luminous expression.

During the time in which religion was taking effectual hold of the mind of John Wesley, his brother Charles received similar impressions; and after a short period we find them, together with Mr. Whitefield, formed into an association in the university, for the purposes of religious improvement and devotion. In the then state of society, any such union was too remarkable not to excite attention, and even to incur the strong disapprobation of the university. We

have reason to bless God for a great improvement in this respect. Prudence, diligence, attention to the duties and studies of the place, and general consistency of conduct in religious men at our universities, have won new trophies for scriptural piety in those seats of learning. Religion should always be thus "justified of her children." Let our university students avoid whatever may have been excessive, irregular, or superstitious in the proceedings of some of the early Methodists; but let them resolve, like those Methodists, "to live by rule, and to pick up the very fragments of time, that not a moment of it may be lost." Will such of them as have consecrated themselves to the service of God, forgive us for addressing them in the words of Wesley's father?

"As to your designs and employments, what can I say less of them than *valde probò*: and that I have the highest reason to bless God for giving me two sons together at Oxford, to whom he has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them." p. 56.

"Be not high minded: preserve an equal temper of mind under whatever treatment you meet with from a not very just or well-natured world. Bear no more sail than is necessary, but steer steady. The less you value yourselves for these unfashionable duties, (as there is no such thing as works of supererogation,) the more all good and wise men will value you, if they see your actions are of a piece; and what is infinitely more, He by whom actions and intentions are weighed will both accept and reward you." Vol. I. p. 57.

One of the circumstances by which the mind of Wesley was confirmed in his pursuit of religion was his intercourse with Mr. Law, the well-known author of "the Serious Call." How admirable, and, we may add, how little allied to some of the views of religion which were taken by that powerful writer, was his saying to Wesley! "You would have a philo-

sophical religion; but there can be no such thing. Religion is the most plain, simple thing in the world. It is only 'we love Him because He first loved us.' Unhappily, we think, for the success of Wesley's labours at this period of his life, other and less evangelical opinions of Law took deep root in his own mind and in the mind of his companions. Hence a sort of superstitious awe of God for a time took the place of love in his understanding and heart. His Saviour was too much excluded from the affections; and some converts were thus driven to a state of morbid depression, who might have been cheered by the contemplation of the cross of Christ and by unfolding to them the bright and blessed promises of Him who died upon it for their salvation.

Our readers will be struck with Mr. Wesley's pithy and sensible observations on the sacrifices made by him to religion at this time.

" 'As to my fortune,' said he, 'I well know, though perhaps others do not, that I could not have borne a larger than I have. For friends, they were either trifling or serious: if triflers, fare them well, a noble escape; if serious, those who are more serious are left. And as for reputation, though it be a glorious instrument of advancing our Master's service, yet there is a better than that—a clean heart, a single eye, and a soul full of God. A fair exchange, if, by the loss of reputation, we can purchase the lowest degree of purity of heart.' " Vol. I. pp. 65, 66.

"On opening the third chapter, we find the two brothers standing by the dying bed of their venerable father. Who would not almost envy them the privilege of hearing the following language from the lips of an expiring parent?

" 'The weaker I am in body, the stronger and more sensible support I feel from God. There is but a step between me and death. To-morrow I would see you all with me round this table, that we may once more drink of the cup of Blessing, before we drink it new in the kingdom of God. With desire have I desired

to eat this passover with you before I die.' " Vol. I. p. 73.

Proceeding to London after his father's death to present a volume by his deceased parent on the book of Job to Queen Caroline, Mr. Wesley found the trustees for the new colony in Georgia inquiring for preachers to visit and instruct the natives and settlers. After getting rid of some doubts and scruples on the subject, he consented to sail for their colony. His decision on the subject was thus announced to an objector:—

" 'Sir, if the Bible be not true, I am as very a fool and madman as you can conceive; but if it be of God, I am sober-minded. For he has declared, 'There is no man that hath left house, or friends, or brethren, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.' " Vol. I. p. 76.

On the 14th of October, 1735, John and Charles Wesley, with two companions of their own habits, Delamotte and Ingham, embarked at Gravesend.

In speaking of the state of Wesley's mind at this period, Mr. Southey adduces the following sentence as a proof of his contempt for human learning. It is your duty, says Wesley to his brother Samuel, to instruct your pupils "not only in the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin, but much more in the Gospel!" But surely if the Scriptures apply the term "beggarly elements" to the first rudiments of religion, it may be applied without disparagement to secular studies. We give the following extract from his Journal of this date, both to prove that Wesley was at this time himself no practical despiser of secular study, and to supply some of our missionaries with a scheme of employment for their voyage.

"The course of life which they adopted on board was as regular as the circumstances of a voyage would allow, and as severe as the rule of a monastic

order. From four in the morning till five they used private prayer; from five till seven they read the Bible together, carefully comparing it with the writings of the earliest ages, that they might not lean to their own understandings. At seven they breakfasted, and they had public prayers at eight. From nine till twelve John Wesley was employed in learning German, Delamotte pursued his Greek studies, Charles wrote sermons, and Ingham instructed the children: and at twelve they met to give an account to one another of what they had done since their last meeting, and of what they intended to do before their next.— They dined about one; and from dinner till four the time was spent in reading to those of whom each had taken especial charge, or in exhorting them severally, as the case might require. There were evening prayers at four, when the second lesson was explained, or the children were catechised and instructed before the congregation.— From six to seven each read in his cabin to a few of the passengers. At seven Wesley joined with the Germans in their public service, and Ingham read between the decks to as many as desired to hear. At eight they met again to instruct and exhort. By this time they were pretty well wearied with exhortations and instruction; and between nine and ten they went to bed, where, as Wesley says, neither the roaring of the sea, nor the motion of the ship, could take away the refreshing sleep which God gave them.” pp. 81, 82.

It was at this time that Mr. Wesley formed his acquaintance with the Moravians; a circumstance of much influence in the future events of his life. We are tempted here to extract the account given by Mr. Southey himself of these people, with a view to qualify what is afterwards said respecting them.

“It was a rough season, their passage was tempestuous; and, during the storm, Wesley felt that he was unfit, because he was unwilling, to die. Ashamed of his unwillingness, he reproached himself as if he had no faith, and he admired the impassible tranquillity to which the Moravians had attained. They had evinced that they were delivered from pride, anger, and revenge: those servile offices, which none of Christ. Observ. No. 227.

the English would perform for the other passengers, they offered themselves to undertake, and would receive no recompense; saying, it was good for their proud hearts, and their Saviour had done more for them. No injury could move their meekness: if they were struck or thrown down, they made no complaint, nor suffered the slightest indication of resentment to appear. Wesley was curious to see whether they were equally delivered from the spirit of fear, and this he had an opportunity of ascertaining. In the midst of the psalm with which they began their service, the sea broke over, split the main sail, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if, he says, the great deep had already swallowed us up. A dreadful screaming was heard among the English colonists: the Moravians calmly sung on. Wesley afterwards asked one of them if he was not afraid at that time: he replied, ‘I thank God, no.’ He was then asked if the women and children were not afraid: his answer was, ‘No; our women and children are not afraid to die.’” p. 81.

The residence of Wesley in Georgia is that period of his life in which his course more resembles, than any other part of it, the course of ordinary labourers in the vineyard of God. On other occasions every stroke seems to have told, and mountains of difficulty to have vanished before him. In this instance the struggle was arduous, and the success by no means remarkable. In the midst of a severe conflict with the friends of a young person to whom he had at first shewn some attention, and for whom he certainly felt much regard—but whom the Moravians solemnly urged him, and probably on strong grounds, not to marry, and whom he afterwards repelled from the communion table, for some part of her conduct which he considered reprehensible—he departed hastily for England. We think that Mr. Southey speaks with less than his usual candour in some parts of this chapter, in pro-

nouncing judgment on the conduct of Wesley. A body of new colonists are, it must be remembered, often among the most impracticable of all subjects for instruction or control — It is certainly possible that at that time Wesley expected too much from his hearers; that he demanded too peremptorily of others the sacrifices so easy to a man of his own self-denying habits; that his somewhat mystic and ascetic opinions, derived chiefly from Law, threw a gloom over his exhibitions of the Gospel; and that he strove rather to force by terror, than to draw by the cords of love. Indeed his own admirable analysis of the condition of his mind, extracted from his *Journal* of this date, seems to warrant some of these conclusions.

“‘It is now,’ he said, ‘two years and almost four months since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity. But what have I learnt myself mean time? Why,—what I the least of all suspected,—that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. I am not mad, though I thus speak, but I speak the words of truth and soberness; if haply some of those who still dream may awake, and see that as I am, so are they. Are they read in philosophy? So was I. In ancient or modern tongues? So was I also. Are they versed in the science of divinity? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things? The very same could I do. Are they plenteous in alms? Behold, I gave all my goods to feed the poor. Do they give of their labour as well as their substance? I have laboured more abundantly than them all. Are they willing to suffer for their brethren? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, ease, country. I have put my life in my hand wandering into strange lands; I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God shall please to bring upon me. But does all this (be it more or less, it matters not,) make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did, or can, know, say, give, do, or suffer, justify me in his sight? If the ora-

cles of God are true, if we are still to abide by the Law and Testimony, all these things, though when ennobled by faith in Christ they are holy, and just, and good, yet without it are dung and dross. Thus then have I learned, in the ends of the earth, that my whole heart is altogether corrupt and abominable, and consequently my whole life;—that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making any atonement for the least of those sins, which are more in number than the hairs of my head, that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves;—that having the sentence of death in my heart, and nothing in or of myself to plead, I have no hope but that of being justified freely through the redemption that is in Jesus,—but that if I seek I shall find Christ, and be found in him.” pp. 132—134.

The fourth chapter opens with a detailed account of the successes of Whitefield as a preacher before he embarked for Georgia; and they are perhaps without any parallel in the history of latter ages. The following passage exhibits the portrait of this singular and distinguished man.

“The man who produced this extraordinary effect had many natural advantages. He was something above the middle stature, well proportioned, though at that time slender, and remarkable for a native gracefulness of manner. His complexion was very fair, his features regular, his eyes small and lively, of a dark blue colour: in recovering from the measles he had contracted a squint with one of them; but this peculiarity rather rendered the expression of his countenance more memorable, than in any degree lessened the effect of its uncommon sweetness. His voice excelled both in melody and compass, and its fine modulations were happily accompanied by that grace of action which he possessed in an eminent degree, and which has been said to be the chief requisite of an orator. An ignorant man described his eloquence oddly but strikingly, when he said, that Mr. Whitefield preached like a lion. So strange a comparison conveyed no unapt a notion of the force and vehemence and passion of that oratory which awed the hearers, and made them tremble

like Felix before the Apostle. For believing himself to be the messenger of God, commissioned to call sinners to repentance, he spoke as one conscious of his high credentials, with authority and power; yet in all his discourses there was a fervent and melting charity, an earnestness of persuasion, an outpouring of redundant love, partaking the virtue of that faith from which it flowed, inasmuch as it seemed to enter the heart which it pierced, and to heal it as with balm." p. 150.

On Wesley's return from Georgia, which was nearly contemporaneous with the departure of Whitefield for that country, he fell into the society of Peter Boelher, and other Moravians; and from them received not only clearer views of the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith in a crucified Redeemer, but also some less correct opinions on the doctrine of conversion, and the necessity of a sensible knowledge of our justification and forgiveness, in order to our being actually in a state of safety. Upon these points we may have occasion to touch before we conclude.

There are inserted in this part of the volume, two letters, with which our readers would be much interested, of Wesley and Law to each other, calculated to leave a very favourable impression of the self-government and temper of the latter individual. But he either did not perceive, or had not the candour to avow, the deficiencies of his own writings on the subject of justification by faith in the blood of a Redeemer—a defect which must always materially impair their value, and destroy their practical efficacy.

We should be glad to see Mr. Southey adopt, in some future edition, a more orthodox title for that spirit who "goeth about seeking whom he may devour," than the "personified principle of evil." This phraseology is in the style of those who deny the existence or influence of the devil; among which number

we should hope Mr. Southey is too well read in Scripture to be classed.

The fifth chapter contains a brief and spirited sketch of the history of the Church of the "United Brethren," or Moravians, on which we have not space to enter. A passage occurs on this subject (which we shall not transcribe,) the apologetic part of which we cordially approve; but with respect to the argumentative part, we cannot by any means admit that the acknowledged improprieties of language in the old Moravian hymns are to be traced, as Mr. Southey seems to trace them, to the same sources with the gross impurities of Paganism. These latter were nothing less than the efforts of corrupt nature to consecrate the dishonest works of darkness, and to indulge human passions, under the pretext of serving the gods. The language of the Moravians, on the contrary, exceptionable as it was, neither sprung from licentiousness nor was designed to minister to it. It arose in part probably from some luckless poetaster among them, (and, by the way, at this moment the poetry published in their text books is about the very worst in any language,) adopting the notion that the Song of Solomon supplied the best model for spiritual composition—which notion contributed to form a taste for such hymns in their body. And in part it may be traced to their simplicity, and profound and total ignorance of the world, which veiled to them the probable perversion of such language by grosser minds. If it is remembered that Madame Guion; that the Pietists, with the saintly Fenelon at their head; that even Cowper, for a season, fell into something of the same error; we shall not be tempted to associate these defects in taste and judgment, with the licentious rites of Paganism. We wish Mr. Southey had been induced by the general respect which

he evidently entertains for the Moravians, to withhold certain of these absurd poems from the public eye—poems long since banished from the books of the Moravians, and which surely deserve no place in the enduring volumes of the present work. Perhaps in another edition he will feel it right to abstain from inflicting upon modern Moravians the penalty due to the follies of some of their ancestors—follies which, he well knows, none regret and condemn more than themselves.

The sixth chapter contains an interesting account of Mr. Wesley's conferences with Archbishop Potter and Bishop Gibson—conferences not a little creditable to the temper of our ecclesiastical governors; and of Whitefield's labours after his return from Georgia, in the open air, among the colliers at Kingswood. Is it wonderful that men should have been hurried into excesses who were the main actors in scenes such as those described in the following sentences?

“‘The sun shone very bright,’ remarks Mr. Whitefield, ‘and the people standing in such an awful manner round the mount, in the profoundest silence, filled me with a holy admiration. Blessed be God for such a plentiful harvest. Lord, do thou send forth more labourers into thy harvest!’ On another occasion he says, ‘The trees and hedges were full. All was hush when I began: the sun shone bright, and God enabled me to preach for an hour with great power, and so loud, that all, I was told, could hear me. Blessed be God, Mr. — spoke right; the fire is kindled in the country!’—‘To behold such crowds standing together in such an awful silence, and to hear the echo of their singing run from one end of them to the other, was very solemn and striking. How infinitely more solemn and striking will the general assembly of the spirits of just men made perfect be, when they join in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb in heaven!’ Yet he says, ‘As the scene was new, and I had just began to be an extempore preacher, it often occasioned many inward conflicts. Sometimes, when twenty thousand people were before me, I had not, in my

own apprehension, a word to say either to God or them. But I never was totally deserted; and frequently (for to deny it would be lying against God) so assisted, that I knew by happy experience what our Lord meant by saying, ‘out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters.’ The deep silence of his rude auditors was the first proof that he had impressed them; and it may well be imagined how greatly the consciousness and confidence of his own powers must have been increased, when, as he says, he saw the white gutters made by the tears which plentifully fell down their black cheeks,—black as they came out of their coal-pits. ‘The open firmament above me,’ says he, ‘the prospect of the adjacent fields, with the sight of thousands and thousands, some in coaches, some on horseback, and some in the trees, and at times all affected and drenched in tears together; to which sometimes was added the solemnity of the approaching evening, was almost too much for, and quite overcame me.’” Vol. I. pp. 235, 236.

After the return of Whitefield to Georgia, Wesley occupied the station which his friend and coadjutor had left empty at Bristol; and in the seventh and eighth chapters we have an account of his proceedings in that neighbourhood. Upon these it is impossible for us even to enter; but to one or two topics noticed in these chapters, we think it right briefly to call the attention of our readers. The title of a part of one of these chapters, is “the Extravagancies of the Methodists;” and we must say that the contents of the chapters serve to illustrate the title. As, however, we have no taste for such scenes as occur in this and other parts of these volumes, and see no benefit to be derived from recording them, we shall pass them over, and proceed to Mr. Southey's general comment upon them;—a comment in which we are, on the whole, disposed to concur.

“A powerful doctrine preached with passionate sincerity, with fervid zeal, and with vehement eloquence, produced a powerful effect upon weak minds, ardent feelings, and disordered fancies.—

There are passions which are as infectious as the plague, and fear itself is not more so than fanaticism. When once these bodily affections were declared to be the work of grace, the process of regeneration, the agonies of the new-birth, a free licence was proclaimed for every kind of extravagance. And when the preacher, instead of exhorting his auditors to commune with their own hearts, and in their chambers, and be still, encouraged them to throw off all restraint, and abandon themselves before the congregation to these mixed sensations of mind and body, the consequences were what might be anticipated." Vol. I. pp. 246, 247.

Our humble opinion on the point has been again and again delivered, and it amounts to this: That such bodily impressions are not the proper results of religious truth; that they may, on the contrary, be the mere fruit of hypocrisy; that they are very often the issue of disordered nerves, or of a heated fancy, or of mere sympathy; that they are not to be confounded with conversion of heart to God; and finally, that they are to be calmly but resolutely discouraged by every real friend of religion. It is because Mr. Wesley for a long time seemed to regard these impressions as the genuine and proper fruits of the Holy Spirit, that we are disposed to charge him with credulity. And it is because when he at length saw through them, he did not boldly and explicitly condemn them, that we feel unable altogether to defend him against the charge of disingenuousness.

There are some points, of a more doctrinal cast, in these chapters on which we are less able to agree with Mr. Southey. Let our readers take, for example, part of Wesley's vindication of himself from the charge of Popery, with the author's comment upon it.

" 'Now take this to yourselves,' he says, 'whosoever ye are, high or low, dissenters or churchmen, clergy or laity, who have advanced this shameless charge, and digest it how you can! O ye fools,' he exclaims, 'when will ye understand that the preach-

ing justification by faith alone, the allowing no meritorious cause of justification but the death and the righteousness of Christ, and no conditional or instrumental cause but faith, is overturning Popery from the foundation? When will ye understand that the most destructive of all those errors which Rome, the mother of abominations, hath brought forth (compared to which transubstantiation and a hundred more, are trifles light as air) is, that we are justified by works, or (to express the same thing a little more decently) by faith and works. Now, do I preach this? I did for ten years: I was fundamentally a Papist, and knew it not. But I do now testify to all (and it is the very point for asserting which I have to this day been called in question,) that no good works can be done before justification, none which have not in them the nature of sin.' This doctrine, however, was not preached in all the naked absurdity of its consequences." Vol. I. pp. 287, 288.

Is Mr. Southey aware, that in this sentence he censures not only the plain doctrine of Scripture, but the express words of the formularies of that church whose honour and interests he not only appears, but doubtless is most anxious, to maintain? Among his multifarious reading, it would be wonderful indeed if he had never met with the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth Articles of Religion.

In the eighth chapter, we find the following passage, which, with the exception of the single expression "born in the image of the devil," (an expression certainly neither scriptural nor just,) we consider as presenting so logical and masterly a description of some of the points in dispute among our clergy at the present moment, that we are induced to extract it.

"At this time Wesley believed that he differed in no point from the Church of England, but preached her fundamental doctrines, as they were clearly laid down, both in her prayers, articles, and homilies. But from those clergy who in reality dissented from the church, though they owned it not, he differed, he said, in these points; they spoke of justification either as the same thing with sanctification, or as something consequent upon it; he believed jus-

tification to be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it. The difference would have been of little consequence had it consisted only in this logomachy: how many thousand and ten thousand Christians have taken, and will take, the right course to heaven, without understanding, thinking, or perhaps hearing of these terms, but satisfied with the hope, and safe in the promise of their salvation! They spake of our own holiness or good works, he said, as the cause of our justification: he believed that the death and righteousness of Christ were the whole and sole cause. They spake of good works as a condition of justification, necessarily previous to it: he believed no good work could be previous to it, and consequently could not be a condition of it; but that we are justified (being till that hour ungodly, and therefore incapable of doing any good work) by faith alone—faith without works—faith including no good work though it produces all. They spake of sanctification as if it were an outward thing, which consisted in doing no harm, and in doing what is called good: he believed that it was the life of God in the soul of man; a participation of the Divine nature; the mind that was in Christ; the renewal of our heart after the image of him that created us. They spake of the new birth as an outward thing; as if it were no more than baptism, or at most a change from a vicious to what is called a virtuous life: he believed that it was an entire change of our inmost nature, from the image of the devil wherein we are born, to the image of God. 'There is, therefore,' he says, 'a wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcilable difference between us; so that if they speak the truth as it is in Jesus, I am found a false witness before God; but if I teach the way of God in truth, they are blind leaders of the blind.' But where learnt he this exaggerated and monstrous notion of the innate depravity of man? And who taught him that man, who was created in the image of his Maker, was depraved into an image of the devil at birth? Assuredly not He who said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' " Vol. I. pp. 295—297.

We have included in the above extract Mr. Southey's comment on Wesley's delineation. Of this we must say, that if he merely meant

to reprobate the expression to which we have already referred, we agree with him. But we are not altogether without apprehension that his objection is meant to take a wider range, and to denounce an important scriptural doctrine, as well as an ill-judged and exaggerated mode of stating it. For whoever believes the Bible, and regards our Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, as containing a just view of its doctrines, must believe, that though man *was* originally "created in the image of his Maker," he is now "depraved" "at birth"—"born in sin"—"by nature a child of wrath."

The following account of the death of the venerable mother of Mr. Wesley, is very interesting.

"To this stage Methodism had advanced when Wesley lost his mother, in a good old age, ready and willing to depart. Arriving in London from one of his circuits, he found her 'on the borders of eternity; but she had no doubt or fear, nor any desire but, as soon as God should call, to depart and to be with Christ.' On the third day after his arrival, he perceived that her change was near. 'I sat down,' he says, 'on the bed side. She was in her last conflict, unable to speak, but I believe quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward, while we commended her soul to God. From three to four the silver cord was loosing, and the wheel breaking at the cistern; and then, without any struggle, or sigh, or groan, the soul was set at liberty. We stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech: "Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God." ' He performed the funeral service himself, and thus feelingly describes it: 'Almost an innumerable company of people being gathered together, about five in the afternoon I committed to the earth the body of my mother to sleep with her fathers. The portion of Scripture from which I afterwards spoke was, "I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw

the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." It was one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see, on this side eternity." Vol. II. pp. 2, 3.

Mr. Wesley, in the course of his journeyings, arrived at Epworth, the parish in which his father had long resided as minister, and where much of his own youth had been spent. Both his own account of his preaching on the tombstone of his parent, and Mr. Southey's comment upon the fact, will, we think, gratify our reader.

"Wesley has been accused harshly and hastily of want of feeling, because he preached upon his father's grave. But it was from feeling, as much as enthusiasm, that he acted, knowing that he should derive a deeper passion from the ground upon which he stood; like the Greek tragedian, who when he performed *Electra*, brought into the theatre the urn containing the ashes of his own child. Nor was there any danger that the act should be misconstrued by those who heard him: mad they might think him, but they knew his domestic character, and were assured that he had not stood with a holier or more reverential feeling beside that grave when his father's body was consigned to it, earth to earth. Seven successive evenings he preached upon that tomb-stone, and in no place did he ever preach with greater effect. 'Lamentations,' he says, 'and great groanings, were heard, God bowing their hearts so, and on every side, as, with one accord, they lifted up their voices and wept aloud; several dropt down as dead; and, among the rest, such a cry was heard of sinners groaning for the righteousness of faith, as almost drowned my voice. But many of these soon lifted up their heads with joy, and broke out into thanksgiving, being assured they now had the desire of their soul, the forgiveness of their sins.'" Vol. II. pp. 17, 18.

In the fourteenth chapter we have an account of the outrageous proceedings both of magistrates and mobs against Mr. Wesley and his followers. Such proceedings nothing can justify. The following quota-

tion, among others which might be made from this very chapter, may serve to illustrate Mr. Wesley's state of mind at this time, and exhibits pretensions which were likely to offend the sober friends of religion, yet we think Mr. Southey has altogether erred in regarding these as having tended to excite the profane and irreligious to abuse and violence.

"'My horse,' says Mr. Wesley, in his Journal, 'was so exceedingly lame, that I was afraid I must have lain by. We could not discern what it was that was amiss, and yet he would scarce set his foot to the ground. By riding thus seven miles I was thoroughly tired, and my head ached more than it had done for some months. What I here aver is the naked fact: let every man account for it as he sees good. I then thought, 'Cannot God heal either man or beast, by any means, or without any?' Immediately my weariness and headache ceased, and my horse's lameness in the same instant. Nor did he halt any more either that day or the next.'" Vol. II. pp. 24, 25.

We have been much struck by Mr. Wesley's observations upon the distinction between rich and poor as auditors in a congregation.

"This course of life led him into a lower sphere of society than that wherein he would otherwise have moved; and he thought himself a gainer by the change. Writing to some Earl, who took a lively interest in the revival of religion which, through the impulse given, directly or indirectly, by Methodism, was taking place, he says, 'To speak rough truth, I do not desire any intercourse with any persons of quality in England. I mean, for my own sake. They do me no good, and, I fear, I can do none to them.' To another correspondent he says, 'I have found some of the uneducated poor who have exquisite taste and sentiment; and many, very many of the rich, who have scarcely any at all.'—'In most genteel religious people there is so strange a mixture, that I have seldom much confidence in them. But I love the poor; in many of them I find pure genuine grace, unmixed with paint, folly, and affectation.' And again; 'How unspeakable is the advantage in point of common sense, which middling people have over the rich! There is so much paint and affectation, so

many unmeaning words and senseless customs among people of rank, as fully justify the remark made 1700 years ago, *Sensus communis in illâ fortunâ rarus*.—" 'Tis well," he says, "a few of the rich and noble are called. Oh, that God would increase their number! But I should rejoice, were it the will of God, if it were done by the ministry of others. If I might choose, I should still, as I have done hitherto, preach the Gospel to the poor." Preaching in Monk-town church, (one of the three belonging to Pembroke,) a large old ruinous building, he says, "I suppose it has scarce had such a congregation in it during this century. Many of them were gay genteel people; so I spake on the first elements of the Gospel: but I was still out of their depth. Oh, how hard it is to be shallow enough for a polite audience!" Vol. II. pp. 65, 66.

It is seldom that any minister has so good an opportunity as Mr. Wesley had of ascertaining the causes which led his people to desert him. The following is his account of seventy-six persons who had in three months withdrawn from one of his societies.

"But even where Methodism was well established, and, on the whole flourishing, there were great fluctuations, and Wesley soon found how little he could depend upon the perseverance of his converts. Early in his career he took the trouble of inquiring into the motives of seventy-six persons, who, in the course of three months, had withdrawn from one of his societies in the north. The result was curious. Fourteen of them said they left it because otherwise their ministers would not give them the sacrament: these, be it observed, were chiefly Dissenters. Nine, because their husbands or wives were not willing they should stay in it. Twelve, because their parents were not willing. Five, because their master and mistress would not let them come. Seven, because their acquaintance persuaded them to leave it. Five, because people said such bad things of the society. Nine, because they would not be laughed at. Three, because they would not lose the poors' allowance. Three more, because they could not spare time to come. Two, because it was too far off. One, because she was afraid of falling into fits: her reason might have

taught Wesley a useful lesson. One, because people were so rude in the street. Two, because Thomas Naisbit was in the society. One, because he would not turn his back on his baptism. One, because the Methodists were mere Church-of-England-men. And one, because it was time enough to serve God yet." Vol. II. p. 69.

Our readers will be amused with the brief notice in his Journal of the worldly possessions of one of his preachers, who had fallen a victim to his ministerial zeal.

"St. Francis himself," observes Mr. Southey, "might have been satisfied with such a disciple." "All his clothes, linen and woollen, stockings, hat, and wig, are not thought sufficient to answer his funeral expenses, which amount to 1*l.* 1*s.* 3*d.* All the money he had was 1*s.* 4*d.*—Enough for any unmarried preacher of the Gospel to leave to his executors." Vol. II. p. 82.

The seventeenth and eighteenth chapters contain some curious biographical notices of several of his most distinguished preachers; but we are compelled to pass them by with the single observation—that, if the occasional extravagance of some of these individuals is somewhat alarming, their general faith, love, zeal, and forbearance are such as must reflect honour on any Christian community, to which they may have belonged.

The next chapter to which we shall conduct our readers is the twentieth, on the doctrines and opinions of Wesley. These opinions, Mr. Southey has endeavoured, as far as possible, to state in Mr. Wesley's own words. And he has given, though not always a perfectly clear, yet on the whole not an unfair view of them. We shall think it right to make several extracts from this chapter.

Considering the terms in which Mr. Southey frequently speaks of Wesley's opinions, there appears much inconsistency in the opening sentences of this chapter. We do

not, however, object to the statement which it contains, as being in itself too laudatory.

"Wesley never departed willingly or knowingly from the doctrines of the Church of England, in which he had been trained up, and with which he was conscientiously satisfied after full and free inquiry. Upon points which have not been revealed, but are within the scope of reason, he formed opinions for himself, which were generally clear, consistent with the Christian system, and creditable, for the most part, both to his feelings and his judgment. But he laid no stress upon them, and never proposed them for more than they were worth." Vol. II. p. 166

The next extract we give as a striking specimen of Wesley's forcible manner of stating a doctrinal truth.

"But what is faith? 'Not an opinion,' said Wesley, 'nor any number of opinions put together, be they ever so true. A string of opinions is no more Christian faith, than a string of beads is Christian holiness. It is not an assent to any opinion, or any number of opinions. A man may assent to three, or three-and-twenty creeds: he may assent to all the Old and New Testament (at least as far as he understands them,) and yet have no Christian faith at all. The faith by which the promise is attained is represented by Christianity as a power wrought by the Almighty in an immortal spirit, inhabiting a house of clay, to see through that veil into the world of spirits, into things invisible and eternal: a power to discern those things which, with eyes of flesh and blood, no man hath seen, or can see; either by reason of their nature, which (though they surround us on every side) is not perceivable by these gross senses; or by reason of their distance, as being yet afar off in the bosom of eternity. It sheweth what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither could it before enter into our heart to conceive; and all this in the clearest light, with the fullest certainty and evidence. For it does not leave us to receive our notice by mere reflection from the dull glass of sense, but resolves a thousand enigmas of the highest concern, by giving faculties suited to things invisible. It is the eye of the new-born soul, whereby every true believer 'seeth Him who is Christ. *Observ. No. 227.*

invisible." It is the ear of the soul, whereby the sinner "hears the voice of the Son of God and lives;" the palate of the soul (if the expression may be allowed,) whereby a believer "tastes the good word and the powers of the world to come;" the feeling of the soul, whereby, "through the power of the Highest overshadowing him," he perceives the presence of Him in whom he lives, and moves, and has his being, and feels the love of God shed abroad in his heart. It is the internal evidence of Christianity, a perpetual revelation, equally strong, equally new, through all the centuries which have elapsed since the Incarnation, and passing now, even as it has done from the beginning, directly from God into the believing soul."—Vol. II. pp. 176, 177.

Without stopping to notice the qualifications which such a statement as this would require to bring it to the sober standard of Scripture, we would merely remark, that in more advanced life, Wesley had the candour to make some very important concessions with respect to some of those peculiar tenets which, during the former part of his course he had so strenuously advocated. For example, on the subject of *assurance*, "he made," says Mr. Southey, "a fairer retraction than was to be expected from the founder of a sect;" distinctly stating, "I have not, for many years, thought a consciousness of acceptance to be essential to justifying faith." Thus also on the doctrine of perfection:—

"He defined it to be a constant communion with God, which fills the heart with humble love; and to this, he insisted, that every believer might attain. Yet he admitted, that it did not include a power never to think a useless thought, nor speak a useless word. Such a perfection is inconsistent with a corruptible body, which makes it impossible always to think right: if, therefore, Christian perfection implies this, he admitted that we must not expect it till after death.—To one of his female disciples, who seems to have written to him under a desponding sense of her own imperfection, he replied in these terms. 'I want you,' he added, 'to be all love.'

This is the perfection I believe and teach ; and this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders, which that high-strained perfection is not. Indeed my judgment is, that (in this case particularly) to overdo is to undo ; and that to set perfection too high, is the most effectual way of driving it out of the world.' 'The perfection of which man is capable, while he dwells in a corruptible body, is the complying with that kind command, "My son, give me thy heart!" It is the loving the Lord his God, with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind.'" Vol. II. pp. 183, 184.

We agree, however, with Mr. Southey, that these occasional explanations do not render the general use of such terms less mischievous, or less reprehensible. If such were his genuine sentiments on *assurance* and *perfection*, his ordinary language, and that of his followers, on these points ought to have been less ambiguous. Why create a difference by phraseology which did not exist in fact ? Why take such pains to clothe themselves with a strange uniform, if we all belong to the same company ? Would it not have been more becoming the conscientious instructor of so large a body whom it was his bounden duty to save from error, to lay aside the terms he had been in the habit of employing, when they no longer fairly conveyed his meaning ?

We think the following quotation very cheering and beautiful, and highly honourable to Mr. Wesley.

"'We may die,' he says, 'without the knowledge of many truths, and yet be carried into Abraham's bosom ; but if we die without love, what will knowledge avail ? Just as much as it avails the devil and his angels ! I will not quarrel with you about any opinion ; only see that your heart be right towards God, that you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, that you love your neighbour, and walk as your Master walked, and I desire no more. I am sick of opinions : I am weary to bear them : my soul loathes this frothy food. Give me solid and substantial religion : give

me an humble gentle lover of God and man ; a man full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy ; a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. Let my soul be with these Christians, wheresoever they are, and whatsoever opinion they are of. 'Whosoever' thus 'doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.'" Vol. II. pp. 192, 193.

On the subject of "discipline," discussed in the next chapter, we have not time to enter ; but shall content ourselves with wishing that much of the general discipline of Methodism were introduced into what we must deem a more scriptural church, and with extracting a single passage, in the general bearing of which, though not in all its sentiments and expressions, we are disposed to concur. We would only remind Mr. Southey, that all men as well as the Methodists, ought to be *professors* of religion ; not indeed *mere* professors, which would but aggravate their condemnation—but still *professors* of faith in Him who has declared, that only those who confess him before men shall be approved by him in the great day of account. The passage is as follows.

"It cannot be supposed that a man of his (Mr. Wesley's) sagacity should have overlooked the objections to which such meetings as the watch-nights and the love feasts were obnoxious : his temper led him to despise and to defy public opinion ; and he saw how well these practices accorded with the interests of Methodism as a separate society. It is not sufficient for such a society that its members should possess a calm, settled principle of religion to be their rule of life and their support in trial : religion must be made a thing of sensation and passion, craving perpetually for sympathy and stimulants, instead of bringing with it peace and contentment. The quiet regularity of domestic devotion must be exchanged for public performances : the members are to be professors of religion ; they must have a part to act, which will at once gratify the sense of

self-importance, and afford employment for the uneasy and restless spirit with which they are possessed. Wesley complained that family religion was the grand desideratum among the Methodists; but, in reality, his institutions were such as to leave little time for it, and to take away the inclination, by making it appear flat and unprofitable after the excitement of class-meetings, band-meetings, love-feasts, and midnight assemblies." Vol. II. pp. 217, 218.

After this succeeds a history of the progress of Methodism in Scotland and Ireland, and then a brief notice of Mr. Wesley's domestic troubles. The unhappiness of his marriage is scarcely a matter of wonder. His mind and time were too much absorbed by public engagements to leave any leisure for domestic occupations, or the assiduities of domestic affection. But the fault was far from being all on Mr. Wesley's side. He must be added to the otherwise illustrious list of philosophers who, with Socrates and Richard Hooker at their head, have found it less difficult to influence a nation than to rule a wife.

In the twenty-fourth chapter, which contains a brief memoir of the well-known Mr. Berridge, one of the most active coadjutors of Mr. Wesley within the church, we find some strong examples of the author's intemperate hostility to Calvinism. We ourselves are not the advocates of that system, even in its mitigated form; and to some of the views of Ultra-Calvinists, we have always opposed ourselves. But it is wholly unintelligible to us how an enlightened and ordinarily candid writer like Mr. Southey can allow himself to forget the claims of Calvinism on the respect and forbearance of the members of the Church of England. Were not her first founders Calvinists? Were not her four first arch-bishops Calvinists? For a considerable period in her history did not an Arminian live only by sufferance in her communion? Through every age of her existence, have not

the Calvinistic portion of her members, whatever we may think of their doctrinal views, been among her best friends and brightest ornaments? We have no design to justify the excesses or irregularities of Mr. Berridge, or of any other man. These were neither essentially Calvinistic nor Arminian, as is abundantly proved in the volumes before us. His judgment we conceive to have been bad, and his taste still worse. The occasional coarseness of his style of composition is such as must revolt every delicate mind. But, still we ought to speak fairly, even when we speak most severely; and Mr. Southey's injustice to the Calvinists is, even in the eyes of many zealous Arminians, a very reprehensible part of his volume.

The subsequent chapters contain much interesting detail on the progress of Methodism during the middle and latter stage of the life of Wesley; on his final separation from the Calvinists; on the success of his labours in America; on his loyalty and independence as a politician; and on the general influence and effects of his system. But we are compelled to pass over all these topics; and to hurry on our readers to the last highly interesting chapter, entitled "Wesley in Old Age."

From this chapter, we begin by extracting his account of himself at the age of seventy-two.

"How is this, that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago; that my sight is considerably better now, and my nerves firmer than they were then; that I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is the good pleasure of God, who doth whatsoever pleaseth him. The chief means are, my constantly rising at four for about fifty years; my generally preaching at five in the morning—one of the most healthy exercises in the world; my never travelling less, by sea or land, than four thousand five hundred miles in a year." Repeating the same question after another

year had elapsed, he added to this list of natural means, 'the ability, if ever I want, to sleep immediately; the never losing a night's sleep in my life; two violent fevers, and two deep consumptions;—these, it is true, were rough medicines; but they were of admirable service, causing my flesh to come again as the flesh of a little child. May I add, lastly, evenness of temper? I feel and grieve; but, by the grace of God, I fret at nothing. But still, the help that is done upon earth, he doth it himself; and this he doth in answer to many prayers.' " Vol. II. pp. 546, 547.

The account of the last public ministrations of Wesley's friend Mr. Fletcher is too striking to be omitted.

"He had taken cold, and a considerable degree of fever had been induced; but no persuasion could prevail upon him to stay from church on the Sunday, nor even to permit that any part of the service should be performed for him. It was the will of the Lord, he said, that he should go; and he assured his wife and his friends that God would strengthen him to go through the duties of the day. Before he had proceeded far in the service, he grew pale, and faltered in his speech, and could scarcely keep himself from fainting. The congregation were greatly affected and alarmed; and Mrs. Fletcher, pressing through the crowd, earnestly entreated him not to persevere in what was so evidently beyond his strength. He recovered, however, when the windows were opened, exerted himself against the mortal illness which he felt, went through the service, and preached with remarkable earnestness, and with not less effect, for his parishioners plainly saw that the hand of death was upon him. After the sermon, he walked to the communion-table, saying, 'I am going to throw myself under the wings of the cherubim, before the mercy-seat!'—Here (it is his widow who describes this last extraordinary effort of enthusiastic devotion) 'the same distressing scene was renewed, with additional solemnity. The people were deeply affected while they beheld him offering up the last languid remains of a life that had been lavishly spent in their service. Groans and tears were on every side. In going through this last part of his duty, he was exhausted again and again; but his spiritual vigour

triumphed over his bodily weakness. After several times sinking on the sacramental table, he still resumed his sacred work, and cheerfully distributed, with his dying hand, the love memorials of his dying Lord. In the course of this concluding office, which he performed by means of the most astonishing exertions, he gave out several verses of hymns, and delivered many affectionate exhortations to his people, calling upon them, at intervals, to celebrate the mercy of God in short songs of adoration and praise.' " Vol. II. pp. 551—553.

How beautiful is the following short narrative of the circumstances accompanying Mr. Fletcher's death!

" 'The whole village,' says his friend Mr. Gilpin, 'wore an air of consternation and sadness. Hasty messengers were passing to and fro, with anxious inquiries and confused reports; and the members of every family sat together in silence that day, awaiting with trembling expectation the issue of every hour.' After the evening service, several of the poor, who came from a distance, and who were usually entertained under his roof, lingered about the house, and expressed an earnest wish that they might see their expiring pastor. Their desire was granted. The door of his chamber was set open; directly opposite to which, he was sitting upright in his bed, with the curtains undrawn, 'unaltered in his usual venerable appearance;' and they passed along the gallery one by one, pausing as they passed by the door, to look upon him for the last time. A few hours after this extraordinary scene he breathed his last, without a struggle or a groan, in perfect peace, and in the fulness of faith and of hope. Such was the death of Jean Guillaume de la Flechere, or as he may more properly be designated, in this his adopted country, Fletcher of Madely, a man of whom Methodism may well be proud as the most able of its defenders; and whom the Church of England may hold in honourable remembrance, as one of the most pious and excellent of her sons. 'I was intimately acquainted with him,' says Mr. Wesley, 'for above thirty years. I conversed with him morning, noon, and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles: and

in all that time I never heard him speak one improper word, nor saw him do an improper action. Many exemplary men have I known, holy in heart and life, within fourscore years; but one equal to him I have not known: one so inwardly and outwardly devoted to God, so unblamable a character in every respect, I have not found, either in Europe or America. Nor do I expect to find another such on this side of eternity." Vol. II. pp. 553, 554.

Our readers would have cause to be dissatisfied, unless we gave them the brief account which follows, of the funeral of Mr. Wesley.

"At the desire of many of his friends, his body was carried into the chapel the day preceding the interment, and there lay in a kind of state becoming the person, dressed in his clerical habit, with gown, cassock, and band; the old clerical cap on his head, a Bible in one hand, and a white handkerchief in the other. The face was placid, and the expression which death had fixed upon his venerable features, was that of a serene and heavenly smile. The crowds who flocked to see him were so great, that it was thought prudent, for fear of accidents, to accelerate the funeral, and perform it between five and six in the morning. The intelligence, however, could not be kept entirely secret, and several hundred persons attended at that unusual hour. Mr. Richardson, who performed the service, had been one of his preachers almost thirty years. When he came to that part of the service, 'Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother,' his voice changed, and he substituted the word father; and the feeling with which he did this was such, that the congregation, who were shedding silent tears, burst at once into loud weeping." Vol. II. pp. 562, 563.

With one more extract, in which Mr. Southey sums up his observations on the character of Mr. Wesley, we shall conclude.

"Such was the life, and such the labours of John Wesley; a man of great views,

great energy, and great virtues. That he awakened a zealous spirit, not only in his own community, but in a church which needed something to quicken it, is acknowledged by the members of that church itself; that he encouraged enthusiasm and extravagance, lent a ready ear to false and impossible relations, and spread superstition as well as piety, would hardly be denied by the candid and judicious among his own people. In its immediate effects the powerful principle of religion, which he and his preachers diffused, has reclaimed many from a course of sin, has supported many in poverty, sickness, and affliction, and has imparted to many a triumphant joy in death. What Wesley says of the miracles wrought at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, may fitly be applied here: 'In many of these instances, I see great superstition, as well as strong faith: but God makes allowance for invincible ignorance, and blesses the faith, notwithstanding the superstition.' Concerning the general and remoter consequences of Methodism, opinions will differ. They who consider the wide-spreading schism to which it has led, and who know that the welfare of the country is vitally connected with its church-establishment, may think that the evil overbalances the good. But the good may endure, and the evil be only for a time. In every other sect there is an inherent spirit of hostility to the church of England, too often and too naturally connected with diseased political opinions. So it was in the beginning, and so it will continue to be, as long as those sects endure. But Methodism is free from this, the extravagancies which accompanied its growth are no longer encouraged, and will altogether be discountenanced, as their real nature is understood. This cannot be doubted. It is in the natural course of things that it should purify itself gradually from whatever is objectionable in its institutions. Nor is it beyond the bounds of reasonable hope, that conforming itself to the original intention of its founders, it may again draw towards the Establishment from which it has seceded, and deserve to be recognised as an auxiliary institution, its ministers being analogous to the regulars, and its members to the tertiary and various confraternities of the Romish Church. The obstacles to this are surely not insuperable, perhaps not so difficult as they may appear. And were this effected, John Wesley would then be ranked, not only among the most remarkable and influential men

of his age, but among the great benefactors of his country and his kind." Vol. II. pp. 563—565.

And now, our readers will naturally expect that we should not quit these important volumes without delivering a somewhat more decided and systematic opinion of them, than can perhaps be collected from the observations casually dropped in our hasty analysis of the work. And, though our remarks must be abridged, in consequence of our numerous extracts, and their partial anticipation, we shall proceed to satisfy, as far as we are able, the expectations of such as may be disposed to listen to our judgment on the subject.

In the first place, then, we think it will be conceded on all hands, that the work is executed with great ability. Acute observations, and specimens of fine writing, though marred by occasional carelessness, abound in every part of it.

In the next place, we must acknowledge, with surprise and admiration, the spirit of laborious research which is visible in every part of the work. It is scarcely possible for such tardy readers as ourselves to conceive how Mr. Southey, in the midst of his other well-known occupations, should find leisure to thread the mazes of Methodism; to read, consider, and compare all the works which he appears to have analyzed for the completion of this task. Industry such as this, especially in minds of a rapid and imaginative cast, is too rare not to win, as it deserves, our applause and gratitude.

Neither, we think, is it to be questioned, that a strong effort to be candid, to rise above prejudice, to escape from the spirit of a school in religion, with which the author may now be intimately associated, discovers itself throughout the volumes. We think the work quite as moderate as we could fairly expect from a man in his circumstances. When we find him admitting, for instance, first, that

the Methodists have, on the whole, done more good than harm; and, secondly, that a part of the good effected by them is the revival of zeal and devotion in the Church of England; we ask whether Warburton or Lavington, or the thousand puny warriors who have stolen a shaft from their quivers, have ever done the same justice to Methodism: whether they have not ordinarily treated it as a "*monstrum horrendum*" without one redeeming virtue in its character; and called on us to pursue it, like some dragon in romance, the scourge and horror of the vicinage.

But whilst we claim for these volumes a larger measure of approbation than some excellent persons have been disposed to yield them, we have considerable complaints to urge against them.

In the first place, the author appears to us to be surprisingly *inconsistent* with himself. Not a few persons whom we chance to have met, have passed the most contradictory judgments on Mr. Southey's estimate of Methodism. Some consider him as its inveterate foe; some as half or quite a methodist himself. Possibly, these antagonist critics on Mr. Southey's book, have read only parts of it: and their opposite decisions have been determined by the complexion of the particular parts they happen to have read. He seems to differ from himself every ten pages. Here he breaks a lance with John Wesley. In another place, he uses the same lance to assail his enemies. In one page, nothing is too bad for the father of Methodism; in another, nothing too good. We can conceive some luckless Wesleyan, who chanced to be strongly impregnated with zeal for his master's memory, passing through the hot and cold stages of a fever half a dozen times in an hour, as he reads these volumes. It must, however, be admitted, that the peculiarities of Wesley's own conduct and character render it difficult to pass at

once a short and clear verdict upon him. A simple epithet will not describe a mind made up, in some respects, of very diversified elements. But we conceive that Mr. Southey has not spoken with the decision he might; nor has he so guarded his mind against the passing impression left by each particular event in the life of Wesley, as to come to a consistent and comprehensive judgment on the whole. He has reasoned too much upon particulars, instead of allowing those particulars to conduct him to some general conclusion. He has given a somewhat precipitate judgment upon each distinct feature as it met his eye, instead of waiting to survey the whole face.

Another great fault of the work, is the carelessness and indistinctness with which the author has sometimes expressed himself as to some of the great and fundamental points of the Christian religion. We cannot conceive Mr. Southey to have any doubts respecting the divinity of our Lord; or to be a disbeliever in diabolical agency; or to be disposed to deny the fundamental doctrines of human corruption, of conversion by the Holy Spirit, and of salvation by grace through faith in the blood of a crucified Redeemer. These doctrines are the elementary and indispensable truths, not merely of Scripture, but of the formularies of that church to which he professes, and we have no doubt feels, an ardent attachment. Why, then, should he leave himself open, in the smallest degree, to an imputation of being in doubt as to any of these points? Why, if he means to condemn only the abuse of a doctrine, does he not carefully distinguish the perversion from the thing perverted? Why should he allow sceptics on these subjects, even for a moment to shelter themselves or their opinions, under the broad shield of his authority? And yet so it is. We have heard his heterodoxy, even as to the

divinity and atonement of Christ, and the reality of spiritual influences, asserted again and again. Let Mr. Southey, therefore, remedy as speedily as may be this defect in his volumes. These are not times, if indeed such times could ever exist, in which it becomes the friends of orthodox religion to indulge in equivocal views and neutral statements. Never were the evidences of the Gospel more rudely assailed. And never did it demand more imperatively the unequivocal support of those who profess to receive and value it. In such seasons "he that is not for us is against us." Mr. Southey himself believes that one of the grand services which Methodism had rendered to the Church of England is, that it has revived its attention to the great doctrines of the Reformation. And in this hypothesis we perfectly concur. Such is the benefit as to this point conferred by Methodism, that it cancels, in our eyes, many of its admitted faults. But then we ask of such men as Mr. Southey to give us the good without the evil. The great doctrines of the Reformation—such, for example, as those of the atonement, original sin, justification by faith, regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit—are, we are well persuaded, the only instruments which can give stability to a church, or holiness and happiness to individuals. And therefore, away with all hesitating and ambiguous declarations of these doctrines. Unveil them to a careless and half infidel world. Shew them Christianity surrounded by its proper attributes; not in the meretricious garb of Popery; not wrapped in the chills and fogs of Pelagianism; not divested of all that can shake the nerves of the guilty, quicken the courage of the timid, and attract the heart of the miserable, but in the high and holy form in which she won the affections of apostles, and martyrs, and the first fathers of our own church, and led them to the stake

joyful sufferers for that Saviour who lived and died for them.—One of the evils of Methodism has been, that by associating its peculiar, and, as we think, erroneous views on some points with the doctrines of the Reformation, they have taught many to confound them—to repudiate the one for the sake of the other—to burn the book for the sake of the appendix. Instantaneous conversion, sensible impressions, necessary assurance, with the whole train of dreams and visions, and semi-miracles, and fits, and screamings, and bodily cures, were exclusively and specifically Methodistic—the proper weeds springing in the rank soil of religious excitation. It is not by these that Methodism is honoured. It is not by these that her real converts are made. It was always the large portion of evangelical truth which was mixed up with these, and which neutralized or destroyed their effect, that made its way to the conscience, and converted the man. It is by this that Methodism has hitherto achieved its many noble and extensive conquests over irreligion and vice; and it is by this alone that similar conquests can be extended and perpetuated.

The last charge, and it is a serious one, which we have to bring against Mr. Southey is, that he has in various passages treated the topics of religion with the most inexcusable levity. He is a man of some wit; but he does not always exercise his judgment to discern when wit is out of place. At least in these volumes, we must venture to say, it is frequently misplaced; and the religious mind is often deeply wounded by the offensive mode of its introduction. We will not insult Mr. Southey by dwelling upon subjects so trite as the duty of approaching serious things in a serious spirit, of treating the infirmities of a good man with tenderness, and of not holding up the true servant of God as an object of derision to the profane and world-

ly. He will himself feel the mischief of any expressions tending to such consequences more powerfully than we can paint it. We will therefore forbear from any farther observations on the subject, only remarking that the more deeply any one is impressed with the supreme importance of religious truth, and the more he has acquired of a devotional taste, the less will he be disposed to employ or to relish such levities as we have been grieved to remark in the pages of Mr. Southey.

And now, at the end of our examination of these volumes, it may be asked, as we have often heard it asked before, will the volumes of Mr. Southey do good or harm? To this question we reply, That we hope more than we fear from them. Many of the extracts contained in them, from different pious writers, are calculated to arrest the attention, and to touch the conscience; and many of the histories of devout individuals to affect the heart of his readers; and, if Mr. Southey has not taught us all the lessons he might, or conveyed those lessons always in the most effective manner, he has yet taught us much, through which, under the Divine mercy, we may become wiser, better, and happier. May such be the influence of these volumes on all who read them! May all rise from them resolved to emulate the zeal, without imitating the faults of John Wesley! And to the members of our own church in particular, we would say, may they become as eminent and devoted Christians, and still sounder churchmen! And since it can no longer be alleged to be necessary to overleap the pale of the Establishment, either to find Christians or to make them, may they labour to be useful without being irregular; and to benefit to the utmost extent of their powers the community around them, without disturbing the unity of the church!

Horæ Homileticæ, or Discourses in the Form of Skeletons, upon the whole Scriptures. Vol. VII.—XI. By the Rev. C. SIMEON, M. A. Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. London. 1820.

A CELEBRATED French wit, in some observations on preaching, expresses, in very lively terms, his astonishment that so many thousands should be paid in a Christian country to preach well, and after all should preach so badly. Now, admitting the fact, that there are few good preachers, his observation would merely teach us this, that there are many requisites to good preaching which money will not buy. Nor can the fact itself be altogether disputed; for preaching very rarely attains to any thing like the excellence of which it is capable. Let it be granted that the difficulties which the preacher has to encounter are considerable; that his time is too much limited; that he handles a much hackneyed subject; that he has to contend with the numerous and obstinate prejudices of a fallen and corrupt nature; that his peculiar style of composition rejects much of the art by which other orators prevail. Still, with all these concessions, we conceive that the great mass of preachers fall far, not merely below the possibilities of the pulpit, but below the standard of excellence which may reasonably be proposed to them. And our readers will perhaps not be displeased at our prefacing a short criticism on the remaining five volumes of Mr. Simeon by a few observations, designed to develop some of those causes of this deficiency in the art of preaching, to which we think the public attention has not been sufficiently directed. Mr. Simeon has, however, already occupied so many of our pages, that we feel it right not to make too large demands, in connexion with his volumes, on the patience of our readers.

Christ. Observ. No. 227.

Among the main causes of the inferiority of sermons, we should be inclined to name *the low sense too often entertained of their importance and efficacy*.—It was the error of the days of the Puritans to exalt preaching on the ruins of the other duties of the sanctuary. Forms of prayer were altogether abolished, and the spirit of public prayer can scarcely be said to have long survived them. At the restoration all sound loyalists seem to have pursued but one object; namely, a secession as far as possible from all the principles, tastes, and habits of Puritanism; and accordingly it became the fashion, both of the court and the people, to depreciate preaching as cordially as their Round-head predecessors had exalted it. And this mode of thinking, in common with many others of the age immediately succeeding Puritanism, has to a certain extent descended to our own times. —Preaching, except by a small body of individuals, is regarded as an instrument of comparatively weak power in the control and direction of public opinion. Few would assent to the notion of Massillon, that if it is true, as has often been affirmed, that portents accompany and signalize the birth of monarchs, on account of their influence on the happiness of mankind, much more may they be expected, from the same cause, to signalize the birth of the *ministers* of religion. So far indeed are too many of our legislators and public men, from indulging any superstitious notions of this kind that to them it appears to be of little moment, either *who* preaches or *what* is preached. How rarely is the question asked, in the distribution of church patronage, “What are the powers and habits of the candidate *as a preacher?*” How many of the dignified clergy in this country scarcely ever preach at all; and when they find leisure to occupy the pulpit, how often is it obvious that the powerful enunciation of re-

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ligious truth is not one of the qualifications for which they have been called to their high office !

It is difficult, in considering this subject, not to be struck with the contrast which such low conceptions, on the subject of preaching, exhibit to the opinions of antiquity, and of many distinguished individuals of various ages and countries. Augustin, for instance, expressly says, "The proper office of a bishop is to preach." And says Gregory Nazianzen, "it is our chief function, *πρωτον τῶν ἡμετέρων*." Indeed, it appears from the sermons which are now their main representative to the world, that Ambrose, Chrysostom, Augustin, and most of the Christian fathers were preachers; and that this office, far from being left to the subordinate clergy, was carefully assigned to the very highest.

If we turn from the page of general history to that of our own church and country, we shall find with what anxiety, even in the worst ages of Popery, this means of religious instruction was regarded. In the age of Henry III. all parish priests were enjoined at a provincial synod to "instruct the people committed to their charge, and nourish them with the food of God's word;" and those who neglect this duty are denominated by the synod, "dumb dogs." It is also stated by Erasmus, in his *Ecclesiastes*, that, impressed with the infinite importance of this instrument for the extension of the truth, Henry the Eighth's mother maintained a considerable body of preachers at her own expense. At the Council of Trent, in like manner, the divines, however opposed on other points, agree in insisting upon the imperious duty of these public ministrations of the word of God. We need scarcely carry this history lower. None who are conversant with that admirable church history, whose last and most distinguished writer is now "fallen asleep in Jesus," can have forgotten

with what zeal the first reformers grasped this instrument in order to conduct the spiritual conflict with the powers and principalities opposed to them. The sermons of Luther may, in fact, be considered as among the chief weapons of the Reformation. It was not till he escaped from his solitude—till he exchanged his study for the pulpit—till he thundered out his theses to the assembled multitudes at Wittemberg, that Popery felt the power of the truths which had so often been vainly advocated in the massy volumes of controversy. "Habet (says one of the early Christians) enim nescio quid latentis energię viva vox, et in aures discipuli de auctoris ore transfusa, fortius sonat." And the truth of this sentiment has been exemplified in the history of all countries and times.

These few samples of the language of other days, independently of the decisive testimony of Scripture to the same effect, may serve to shew that the depreciation of preaching, as an instrument of religious and moral reform, is a heresy which at least has not to plead prescription in its favour; but, on the contrary, stands condemned by the voice of discerning and pious men of all classes and ages. Indeed, it is a somewhat singular fact, that the avowed enemies of orthodox religion have almost always been found among the chief despisers and impugners of preaching. It is, for example, one of the maxims of the Racovian or Socinian Catechism, that although preaching might have been necessary for the conversion of the Gentiles, it is no longer necessary after the establishment of Christianity. And Hobbes, in his history of the civil wars, launches out into severe invectives against the liberty granted to the clergy, of haranguing the people without the state having any power to control them. But, not to multiply such examples, it is sufficient to convince

a Christian of the high value of this ordinance, that it is continually referred to in Holy Writ, as one of the main instruments by which the objects of the Gospel are to be accomplished:—"It hath pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." What we wish to see in the ministers of religion, is that sort of practical conviction of the efficacy of pulpit instruction which may lead them to buckle on their armour with holy confidence, assured that he who preaches faithfully will, in the end, never preach in vain.

Another cause of the low state of preaching is, in some instances, connected with that to which we have already referred: we mean, the *absence of labour in the composition of sermons*.—It is not likely that men should bestow much pains in sharpening or polishing the weapon which they conceive is to be of no use to them in the battle. And, in like manner, he who ascends the pulpit hopelessly and heartlessly, who expects his reasonings to fall, like the dart of Priam "telum imbelles sine ictu" on the breast of the audience; he, in short, who preaches without faith, is not likely to give the thought, the time, the mind, to his sermons which are essential for any high achievements in this department of his labours. That a very culpable negligence as to this point prevails at the present moment we cannot doubt; nor is this negligence confined to the more careless and worldly part of the clergy, but extends where we should least expect and desire to see it—to some of the more zealous and spiritual ministers of religion. A distinguished writer and minister on the other side the Tweed, whose own sermons acted almost like an electric shock on the congregations of our metropolis, is rumoured to have complained heavily of a defect of industry and labour in the sermons of individuals amongst ourselves to whose general piety and

talents he bore the most honourable testimony. And we entirely concur with him. We discover in a multitude of pulpit addresses a dearth not only of learning and novelty, but of close reasoning, of apt illustration, and especially of real and profound scriptural knowledge, sufficient to account, in part, at least, for the indifference with which sermons are often received. The pasture is too barren to suffer us to expect that the sheep should manifest any strong desire for it. But we must not be misunderstood. In complaining, among other things, of a want of novelty in sermons, it is not that we expect or wish from the ministers of the Gospel voyages of discovery in religion, or maps of the terra incognita of theology. Nor are we so absurd as to desire to have the fancy regaled with ingenious and far-fetched speculations, images, reasonings, or illustrations. But we *do* expect the preacher not always to occupy the same corner of the field of theology—not always to pursue the same line of march or maintain the same order of battle. We expect that measure of variety which will rebuke the presumption of those who, after hearing him for a few months, venture to predict from one half of a sentence what will infallibly constitute the other half—and in all instances confidently to anticipate the conclusion from the exordium of the discourse. The effect of this sameness and reiteration, of these spiritual infusions being always of the same form, colour, and substance, is almost necessarily to cast the mind into a deep sleep. In saying this we are fully aware of the necessity, especially in the case of the country poor, of not too rapidly changing the topics presented to them—of not, as it were, vaulting over them—of not attempting to convey that by a hint which ought to be unfolded in a paragraph. Repetition of a certain kind is necessary in pulpit oratory.—But then the preacher must not, in

virtue of this necessity, think himself at liberty always to present the same argument in the same form—to travel to the same point precisely by the same route. Whilst he may reasonably conclude that the understandings of many are so dull, and their hearts so hard, as to need the truth to be pressed again and again upon their conscience, let him give diligence, at the same time, to exhibit the truth in all the variety of which it admits. Let him, whilst he adheres to the substance, in every possible way diversify the mode of presenting it. It is, we admit, a strong temptation to a man, originally of a sanguine and eager temperament, who finds sermon after sermon falling (as he deems) ineffectually on the ear of his audience—the well disposed part of them pleased with any argument, and the prejudiced with none—to say to himself, “Any thing will do.” And such, we fear, is the weekly opiate which many a preacher administers to his own conscience, especially when he has for years preached to the same congregation. But this temptation is to be resolutely resisted. Why are the candidates for usefulness to be so much more easily disheartened than the candidates for fame? The *Georgics* cost their author the labour of seven years; and were, therefore, forced from his not unproductive mind at the rate of about a line a day.* The labours of the pulpit neither require nor admit of such a protracted process. But they demand and admit of much more patience, caution, study, toil, than are usually devoted

* The Editor of Massillon's *Lent Sermons* speaks of it as “une facilité qui tient du prodige” that they were generally composed each in ten or twelve days. He adds, “Combien de gens même du métier trouveroient que ce tems suffiroit à peine pour en former et pour en bien diriger le plan!” What would he have said to those who think nothing of “letting off” half a dozen

to them. Let the ministers of the Gospel expect, under the Divine blessing, larger results from their sermons. Let them not be faithless, but believing! Let them throw far from them every suggestion which may minister to the natural and universal sloth of our nature. Let them regard their sermons as they would the wand of the prophet—designed to draw the waters of contrition from the stony heart. Let them believe that God intends to accomplish much by them, and anxiously labour to fit themselves for their high purpose and destination.

Many pious individuals who admit the efficacy of sermons, are betrayed into carelessness of pulpit preparation by certain other erroneous conceptions.

Some, for example, conceive that as all success depends upon the grace of God, any thing like *laborious preparation* for the pulpit, is a *disparagement* of that grace. This, however, is a manifest and most injurious error. It can be no disparagement of the authority and goodness of God to do that which he directs us to do. And he evidently expects assiduity at the hands of all his labourers. If, indeed, it is the will of God that nothing but a crude and meagre picture of truth should be exhibited, why do the Scriptures themselves teem with examples of the strongest reasoning, the most striking imagery, and the most splendid eloquence? Logic and rhetoric are evidently two of the instruments by which it pleases God himself to work; and which, therefore, ought to be employed by his creatures. Some, indeed, may quote against these positions the prayer of Augustin “*a logica libera nos.*” But St. Augustin could mean only the logic of sophists, or of philosophers so called. For otherwise his prayer would be a sentence of condemnation on his own strong reasonings and splendid composition. The truth indeed is, that he and most

of the writers who immediately succeeded the apostolic age, do themselves levy large contributions on learning and eloquence in aid of religion. Let our readers, for instance, consider the work of Augustin against Cresconius; or let them read the works of Clemens Alexandrinus; and they will entertain no doubt whether the earliest friends to religion were among the staunchest friends to human industry and learning.

Another erroneous conception of certain pious individuals is, *that the simplicity of religious truth abhors all ornament*, and that, therefore, it should be carefully excluded from the pulpit. But here, again, we may appeal to Scripture.—Lord Chatham and Mr. Burke are said to have continually delved in Scripture as in an unfathomable mine of all the wealth of oratory. Nor, independent of scriptural example, can we doubt the propriety and expediency of clothing the lessons of religion with all the beauty and grace with which a cultivated imagination or extensive reading supplies the religious instructor. Religion, indeed, abhors false and meretricious ornament. It also demands a greater chasteness and simplicity than perhaps any other subject. But it might as well be affirmed, in spite of the highly decorated temple of the Jews, constructed by the express direction of the Almighty, that every edifice of religion should be formed of stones rough from the quarry, as that good taste, strong reasoning, and the powers of the imagination, ought not to lend their aid to fix and quicken the sluggish attention of a Christian audience.

But we must hasten to bring this prefatory discussion to a conclusion. There is, therefore, only a single additional defect in sermon writers to which we will now call the attention of our readers—and this is their too common ignorance in that depart-

ment of science ordinarily termed *metaphysical*. By metaphysics we mean only *the science of the mind*; or, in simpler terms, a knowledge of the springs of human action. And as on the one hand we conceive that no science can be of more importance to the preacher, so we are apt to think that no science is more commonly neglected. It is, indeed, abundantly sufficient to seal the condemnation of the best argument with many persons, that “it is metaphysical.” And hence, it arises, on the one hand, that the class of men who, by their continual professional scrutiny of the minds of others might be expected to throw most light upon this department of science, are very small contributors to it; and on the other, that if any of them are anxious for that species of metaphysical knowledge more immediately bearing on their profession, they know not where to seek it. The fruits of all this in theology are much of the same kind as if military men were to forswear the subject of military tactics, and physicians that of medicine. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive to what an amount the usefulness of sermons is impaired by ignorance of the human mind. We apprehend that nothing in Scripture itself is more apt to touch and affect the heart than what has been termed, its “power of divination;” or, in other words, that perspicacity by which it exhibits what is in the heart of the hearer, and reveals the man to himself. And an intimate acquaintance with the powers, habits, and workings of the mind, would, to a certain extent, supply the preacher with a talisman of the same kind. We should stand before him convicted, rebuked, and condemned; and often, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who delights to work by rational means on rational creatures, should be led to exclaim, that “God was with him of a truth.”

It would have been necessary

for us, whatever other defects in preachers we had left unnoticed, to have called the attention of our readers to the want of *order*, arrangement, and division, which has for so long a period prevailed in the sermons of English divines, and still prevails to a considerable extent; but the author of the valuable volumes before us has so fairly appropriated this subject to himself, and, with the assistance of Mr. Claude, has so developed the nature of the disease, and displayed its remedies, that we are fully content to leave the patients in his hands.

The present five volumes of Mr. Simeon conclude the series on the whole Scriptures which he has recently given to the world, and carry the Biblical student from the beginning of St. Matthew to the end of the Revelations. We have not much to add in the way of general criticism to the remarks offered on the six volumes on the Old Testament which we previously examined. We discover in them the same clearness, the same power in the development and arrangement of an argument—the same aptness to seize on the main points of his subject, and to render other points subordinate to it—the same fidelity to the spirit of Scripture—the same independence of human system, and the same honest wish to consult and to follow the revealed will of God. With all these excellencies in common with the preceding volumes, it appears to us, that this part of the work is liable to fewer objections than that already examined. The great blemish in the earlier volumes was the occasional, though rare, introduction of what we could not but deem a fanciful interpretation of some of the more obscure passages of Scripture. This defect originated in part, we think, from the plan of the author, to make every part of sacred writ a subject of pulpit discussion. In some books of the Old Testament, especially in those which respect the

religious ceremonial of the Jews, the undertaking involved much difficulty. Though designed primarily for the Jews, the author treats the whole of them as susceptible of a wider and more general interpretation. And this hypothesis is unquestionably just. But in assigning this more general meaning he appears to us occasionally to see more than is meant, and occasionally to elaborate an analogy or a resemblance for which we think he is quite as much indebted to his own ingenuity as to the text. But even the volumes on the Old Testament are but rarely, and the present volumes are scarcely ever, liable to this objection. We will not say, that there are not a few points of interpretation on which we might be tempted to differ from him, even in the New Testament; yet in these cases we should sometimes hesitate to affirm with any confidence that he is wrong. There is in all parts of his work an obvious wish to be right; a familiar acquaintance with the Scripture, and with the sound canons of scriptural interpretation; a power of luminously conveying to others what he sees and knows himself; an anxious desire to glorify God, to exalt the Saviour, and to humble and save the sinner. If a man wishes to convince himself of the general ability with which the division and arrangement of the subjects are executed, let him shut the volume, take the same texts, and try his own hand upon the construction of a skeleton of the same kind, and he will probably find reason to acknowledge that the author possesses at least this title to present two thousand of these sketches to the public, that it would not be easy for many besides himself to present two hundred as good. We have before recommended to our readers to use these skeletons for the purposes of *family devotion*. And in support of that recommendation, we would add, that a perusal of these last five volumes has tended more and more

to convince us of the fitness of the work for that purpose. The sermons, as they stand, are short, clear, spiritual, and forcible; four qualities of rare occurrence in the same discourses and admirably fitting them for domestic use.

It has occurred to us, in the perusal of these last five volumes, that there is another use to which they might be turned with advantage. One of the grand objects, in the *education of youth*, is to instruct them in the habit of analysis and arrangement, in the investigation of subjects presented to them. To this object many works have been dedicated. But the formal rules of composition supplied to them in these works are inadequate to the purpose for which they are designed. A boy constructs, according to rule, his exordium, his discussion, and conclusion; steals, according to rule also, a simile or a contrast; dexterously slips in a quotation or two, which have, as it may happen, something or nothing to do with the subject; and thus confidently presents the literary patchwork as a theme which, because according to pattern, is above all reproach. In the mean time, perhaps, scarcely any degree of thought has been bestowed upon it; and the habit which it is the main object of compositions of this kind to cultivate, that of investigation, has not been exercised. Without, however, abandoning altogether this species of composition, which has its uses, we would earnestly recommend the instructors of the young to lead their pupils gradually to the construction of arguments on the plan of Mr. Simeon—to give them a thesis on which to frame a skeleton—to compare their analysis, or skeleton, with that of this experienced composer, and to point out the inferiority in their juvenile essays which they will be sure to discover. We remember a statement in the life of Le Sage, that, having been led by the shortness of his memory to look out for some more productive quality in his

own mind, after trying various means of acquiring and retaining knowledge, he found none so beneficial as that of reducing every subject to a clear and short analysis or system, drawing it out upon paper, depositing it in a pigeon-hole of his bureau, and at given intervals looking over the various digests so prepared. At his death, it is said, many hundreds of such digests were found in the secret drawers of his cabinet. The plan we are now recommending is something analogous to that of this celebrated writer; and we are convinced that it would tend to create early and fixed habits of clear and close thinking. Of course, it is not our intention to confine a young pupil to such topics as those discussed in Mr. Simeon's volumes. But both master and pupils may learn much in the early stages of such an enterprise, from this veteran tactician; and may afterwards proceed to draw out their own lines of approach, circumvallation, and attack upon those other positions in the region of thought and literature which they may most wish to occupy.

But our readers, especially such of them as may be unable, from the extent of this work, to possess themselves of it, must by this time be desirous of seeing a little less from our own pen, and something more from Mr. Simeon's. It is, however, impossible for us, having before noticed the early volumes of the work, to allow much room for quotation. Enough, however, shall, if possible, be given to afford a specimen of the author's manner.

We will begin by naming a few sermons that will well reward any attention our readers may choose to bestow on them. Such is Sermon 893, on the doctrine of Expediency, illustrated by the case of St. Paul; 817, on the importance of the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ; and 816, on the proper use of the Calvinistic points—a sermon breathing in general the spirit of those Calvinists who

framed the Articles of the Church of England; though asserting, as we conceive, the doctrine of final perseverance in more explicit language than is found in their mouths.—Vol. IX. contains many very important discourses. Let our readers take, for example, 909, on justification by faith—a sermon in which that vital doctrine is stated with much precision and force—and 955, on the nature of evangelical religion. In this volume, also, occur several sermons, from 964 to 967, inclusive, which certainly deserve to be ranked among the best productions of the author. We regret that our limits will not permit us to extract from them.

In sermon 1016, we find a moderate and judicious statement of the doctrines of Calvinism; in sermon 1146, a valuable explanation of the doctrine of “justification by works;” and in 1168, a specimen of the author’s minute attention to practical subjects.

We will now extract one of the sketches, taken not absolutely at random; but selected partly from its excellence, and partly because, from being among the shortest, it is best suited to the capacities of our work. It is numbered 1043.

“The true Christian delineated.

“Phil. iii. 3.—*We are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

“It is much to be lamented that the nature of genuine Christianity is but little understood. An assent to the fundamental articles of our faith, and a conformity to certain rites and ceremonies, are thought sufficient grounds for concluding ourselves real Christians, notwithstanding we are plainly warned by God himself, that religion does not consist in these things. Persons may be, and often are, very zealous advocates for the externals of religion, while they are altogether destitute of its life and power. Such were those whom St. Paul calls, not the sheep of Christ, but ‘dogs;’ not saints, but ‘evil-workers;’ not the circumcision, but, in a way of contempt,

the ‘concision;’ because all their way of piety consisted in a zeal for the cutting of the flesh. Against such persons he thrice enjoins us to ‘beware;’ and then contrasts with theirs the character of the true Christian.

There are three discriminating points which distinguish the circumcision, or the true Christian, from all who are Christians only in name and profession.

“I. They worship God in the Spirit.

“Many never bow their knees before God at all. What they are, they themselves shall judge. Others observe the form of prayer both in public and in private; but their hearts are not engaged: nor is there any difference in their frame, whether they confess their sins, or ask for blessings, or acknowledge benefits received. All their services are without life, and without devotion. The true Christian, on the contrary, though not always in the same frame, ‘worships God in the Spirit;’ that is, not only with the inmost affections of his soul, but through the direction and assistance of the Holy Ghost. If we could see him in his closet before God, we should often behold him bathed in tears, and with hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, imploring mercy at the hands of God. His thanksgivings, too, are not an unmeaning compliment, but a heartfelt acknowledgment, suited in a measure to the mercies he has received. He ‘pours out his soul before God,’ and ‘stirs up himself to lay hold on God,’ and says, like Jacob, ‘I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.’ Let us examine to which of these classes we belong—and we may know infallibly what is our state before God.

“II. They rejoice in Christ Jesus.

“The world have their joys, such as they are, arising from the things of time and sense. Some know no happiness but in lewdness and intemperance. Others, moving either in a continual round of fashionable amusements, or in the pursuit of wealth or honour, find all their pleasure in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Others more rationally seek their happiness in the acquisition of knowledge. While others seem contented to move, like a horse in a mill, in the same round of silly occupation, without aiming at any thing further than an exemption from trouble, and an easy passage through life.

“But the true Christian, while he is alive to all the joys which are pos-

sessed by others, as far as they are pleasing to God, and profitable to his soul, has joys of a far higher nature. He has felt his need of mercy, and has found mercy through Christ Jesus. Hence the very name of 'Jesus is precious to him:' and the richest gratification he can possibly enjoy, is to contemplate the glory and excellency of his Beloved. He does not indeed always feel the same delight in the Saviour, but his richest consolations and sublimest joys arise from this source; insomuch that all the pleasures of sense are nothing in his eyes, in comparison of one hour's fellowship with the Son of God. Indeed, he would not wish to be happy, when he is at a distance from his Lord: in such a state he would consider happiness rather a curse than a blessing. But in whatever state he be with respect to temporal things, a sight of his adorable Saviour will render him completely happy.

"Here again let us inquire into our own experience. We need no surer test of our state than that before us. Let us examine ourselves with care, and 'the Lord give us understanding in all things!'

"III. They have no confidence in the flesh.

"The ungodly world, if in prosperity, 'make gold their confidence,' and 'trust in their uncertain riches.' If, on the other hand, they be in adversity, they look no higher than to their own exertions, or than to their earthly friends, to deliver them. The same creature-confidence pervades all their spiritual concerns: they 'lean altogether on an arm of flesh,' and trust in their own goodness or repentance to recommend them to God, and their own strength and resolution to fulfil his will.

"The true Christian is the very reverse of this. We say not that he has no bias towards these evils, for his old nature still remains within him: but his views with respect to these things are altogether altered; and though he neglects not any means which are proper to be used, he trusts in God only to maintain his prosperity, or to restore it when he has been pleased to afflict him with any calamity. With respect to his soul, also, he has no hope but in God. To the free mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, he trusts for every blessing. In the atoning sacrifice and prevailing intercession of Jesus he confides, as the ground of his acceptance with his reconciled God. On the all-powerful grace of Christ he relies, as that Christ. *Observ. No. 227.*

which alone can enable him to subdue his enemies, and to serve his God. Feeling that he is in himself ignorant, guilty, polluted, and enslaved, he renounces all self-confidence, and makes Jesus his wisdom, his righteousness, his sanctification and redemption.

"Surely there can be no difficulty in ascertaining our proper character, if only we will make this point also a matter of serious self-examination.

"Address.

"1. Those who, according to these distinctions, must be considered as devoid of real Christianity.

"Remember who it is that cuts you off from the number of true Christians. It is not man, but God, even that God who will judge you in the last day, according to his word. O continue not in such a state! but seek that circumcision of the heart which, though condemned by men, shall ultimately have praise of God.

"2. Those who have reason, from the foregoing remarks, to hope that they are Christians indeed.

"What reason have you to bless God for the mercies which have been vouchsafed to you! But remember, it is not by past experience merely you are to judge, but by the continued habit of your mind. Rest not satisfied with any thing you have known; lest you 'begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh.' The text does not characterize the Christian by what he has done, but by what he does; and therefore 'press forward, forgetting what is behind, and reaching forth unto what is before:' and 'as you have received how to walk and please God,' so endeavour to abound more and more." Vol. X. Sermon 1043.

Sermons 1048 and 1059, in the same volume, are truly valuable; but we cannot insert them. In enumerating the foregoing, we beg our readers to believe that we have not been, as it were, taking off the cream of the volumes. They really abound in discourses to the full as good as those we have mentioned. But we have no space for further extracts. Nor have we either space or disposition for producing some of those

skeletons which might possibly a little tend to scare any of our readers from the examination of the rest. In some, we certainly think the statements of the author a little too pungent and unmeasured. And in others, we conceive that his unchanging mode of arrangement, under two or three heads, tends to the excision or neglect of some of the valuable parts of the text. The author, indeed, throws his net very widely; but it is impossible for him to catch all, where all was not meant to be comprehended in one leading idea. We should, on such occasions, be glad to see him a little relax his rules of division; and, like a good general, where his army cannot march in line, to allow them to move in file, or in a still more desultory form. The spirit of the Apostles is often too free to submit to the rules of the orderly book of Mr. Claude and his intelligent disciple.

In concluding our observations on these volumes, we will once more call the attention of our readers to what may be considered as the fundamental principle of Scriptural interpretation on which they are constructed.

That principle is briefly this: To give to every portion of Scripture the sense which the author believes to accord with the intention of the writer; to give this sense, without any of the limitations suggested by a merely human system of theology; and to employ other passages of Holy Writ, so as to settle or limit the meaning of the passage before him, but not thereby to weaken its fulness and force.

In this principle of interpretation, we cordially concur; and we conceive that the more universally and carefully it is adopted and acted upon, the more will the ark of the church be preserved from the shallows and breakers of religious controversy, and carried out into the great broad depths of eternal truth. It has, indeed, been one of the capital offences

of theologians in all ages of the church, that they have set themselves rather to inquire what they conceive the Bible *ought* to have said, than what it actually does say; rather to arraign Scripture at the bar of a human tribunal, than to try their opinions at the bar of Scripture. And the temptations to this offence are considerable. The taste for system, the disposition to dogmatize, the fear of reproach on the score of inaccuracy and inconsistency, the love of party—all prompt us to march under some petty and peculiar flag, rather than take the field under the broad banner of scriptural truth. We cannot, therefore, but consider the public as standing deeply indebted to Mr. Simeon for his anxious and consistent maintenance and illustration of this important principle. As the prefaces to this and his former work exhibit the clearest statement and defence of it, so we may confidently say that it is no where better exemplified than in his own sermons. There is, however, one additional point connected with this subject, on which we should have been glad if the author had entered; and that is, the possible *abuses* of his own great principle. One such abuse we have noticed in our Review of the first series of these volumes; namely, that of not interpreting any particular expression in Scripture according to the analogy of faith supplied us by other passages of Scripture.—A *second* abuse, we conceive, is this; the frequent and elaborate discussion of those topics or expressions of Scripture, which the analogy of faith does not assist us to interpret at all.—And a *third* abuse, perhaps, is that of pushing our inquiries into particular doctrines, undeniably taught in Scripture, beyond the limits to which Scripture conducts us. It is not a sufficient reason for the minute and extended discussion of any given subject in Scripture, that the elements of this subject are to be found in the Sacred Volume. It may be very

difficult, not to say impossible, for us to exhibit the subject in the same simple, abstract, and elemental form in which we find it. Whatever may be our wish, we are almost sure to present it through a medium of our own, which, like a tinted glass, will discolour, though it may not distort the object. All this, however, constitutes no objection to the principle itself; and no man would be more willing, or able, to surround it with such barriers and restrictions, than the author of these volumes.

On only one more topic have we courage to demand the further attention of our readers. Our single and exclusive fear with regard to these volumes is, that they may dangerously minister to the indolence of this self-indulgent age. Although he who borrows from Mr. Simeon must do more for himself than such copyists of other men's discourses as Sir Roger De Coverly wished to be multiplied in the Church of England; yet he who *habitually* draws from these streams, instead of repairing to the fountain head of original composition, is unlikely, we conceive, to become a great, or even a very useful minister. Assistances of this kind are, after all, the easy chairs of theology; and a machine from Merlin's Cave is not a more certain originator or perpetuator of gout in the physical system, than an apparatus of this kind of vacuity and helplessness, if called into habitual operation, in the study of the young divine. Nor let the novice in theology attempt to propitiate a murmuring conscience, by the notion that his own scheme or skeleton will, let his labour be what it may, be far less complete than that of Mr. Simeon. It is highly probable that he judges of himself correctly as to this point; but then his deficiencies in art will be more than supplied by the suggestions of a mind warmed by the topic before him. A sermon needs not merely bones but flesh; not merely flesh, but the *vis*

vivax—the active principle—the breath of life. And that discourse will almost uniformly discover more of this spirit, which is conceived and nursed in the bosom of the writer. Almost every great writer in metaphysics, poetry, philosophy, and practical theology, has become great by *the delineation of the workings of his own mind*. Without thus introverting the eye, he will, whatever may be his skill as an author, either exceed nature or fall below it; will speak to the understanding rather than the heart; will give us rather the empty flourish of the instrument, than the tones and melodies which awaken all the sympathies of the soul—which touch the hidden strings of contrition, and love, and zeal, and tenderness—which carry us out of ourselves, and place us at the mercy of the individual thus acting upon us. Nature has a language, like that ascribed to the heavenly bodies, universally intelligible. Heart answers to heart; conscience to conscience. The very imperfections of the preacher, if he evidently gives us his best—his all—the discoveries made in his own soul—the argument suggested by a heart in earnest, may move the mind to attention and interest. Sincerity is received in lieu of talent; and we value the sermon because we love or respect the man. So strong is our apprehension, therefore, lest the admirable skeletons in these volumes should reduce our younger clergy into mere copyists, or something akin to it, that we would earnestly recommend them scrupulously to construct one sermon in the week out of materials supplied by general reading, by invention, or by original thought; and would further counsel them, in borrowing from Mr. Simeon, rather to consult his sketch than to copy it. Let them be content with small things, at their own expense, rather than aim at high ones at the expense of others. Let them be free to own to what extent

they are indebted to the assistance of another, remembering that nothing is more difficult to overcome than the disreputation of strutting disingenuously in borrowed plumes. We ourselves have heard sermons obviously suggested by the sketches of the author before us; but so modified by the labours of thought, and feeling, and conscience, as to become strictly the address of the speaker.

This is as it should be. The raw material may be that of others; the manufactured article should be our own. Of this raw material, this staple commodity of theology, no man has laid up larger stores in the public wareroom than the able and pious author of these volumes; and we earnestly pray that it may please God to bless and prosper his important labours.

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, &c. &c.

GREAT BRITAIN.

PREPARING for publication:—The Works of Arminius, now first translated into English, with his Life;—Vindiciæ Hebraicæ, occasioned by the Strictures and Innovations of Mr. Bellamy, by H. Hurwitz;—The Correspondence of Charles, Duke of Shrewsbury, by Archdeacon Coxe; The Works of Sir R. Blackmore, now first collected, with his Life, by Mr. Chalmers, 10 vols;—A Classical Tour in Turkey, Greece, and Italy, by P. E. Laurent;—The Beauties of Mozart, Haydn, Handel, &c. adapted to Psalms and Hymns;—Genesis and Daniel defended against Count Volney and Dr. Francis, &c. by J. Overton.

In the press:—The Universe, a Poem, by the Rev. R. Marturm;—Tour in the United States, by W. T. Harris;—Family Cyclopaedia, by J. Jennings.

By an act passed this session, sentence of whipping is not to be awarded on female offenders; but instead of it imprisonment, or solitary confinement.

Another act just passed provides a summary mode of obtaining satisfaction for damages done to buildings, fences, land, crops, or any other kind of property. The offender being taken before a justice of the peace, any time within four months, and the offence proved, he shall forfeit to the party aggrieved, such a sum, not exceeding 5*l.* as shall appear to the justice a reasonable compensation for the injury. Of-

fenders may be taken *instanter*, without warrant. Appeal is allowed to the quarter sessions.

Captain Parry has arrived in London, with intelligence of considerable interest, from our Ships of Discovery in the North. They have succeeded in exploring a passage through Lancaster's Sound, into the Polar Sea, and have penetrated as far as longitude 115 deg. W. between the parallels of 74 and 75 deg. north latitude. In this space twelve islands have been discovered, and named the Islands of New Georgia, in honour of his majesty. The expedition wintered in a harbour on the south side of the largest of these islands. The darkness was such, that at noon they could scarcely see the letters of a book printed with large types. During the prevalence of the winds the thermometer fell to 57½ deg. below zero, at which periods they could not venture into the open air; but when the winds subsided, they found the air quite supportable, and amused themselves in shooting partridges and ptarmigan. Captain Parry met with no inhabitants; but he frequently saw deserted huts on the shore. The Magnetic Pole appeared to be about 100 deg. of west longitude. The conductors of the expedition have no doubt but that there exists a passage to the Icy Cape, which might be penetrated during the month of August, by keeping close to the shore, the powerful radiation of which partially melts the ice; but the passage, even if penetrated, is not likely to serve any commercial purpose.

SPAIN.

The new order of things in Spain has given rise to a most rapid and extraordinary fecundity in journals and other periodical works. Instead of a few scattered publications, occupied chiefly with ecclesiastical annunciations, processions, and a meagre price current, Madrid alone now produces nearly thirty periodical political papers, independently of which the press teems with answers, apologies, and explanations on political topics; and with shoals of sermons, essays, and commentaries on the constitution. There is, indeed, a censor of the press appointed; but, at present, the office is extremely indulgent. The principal country towns also have their journals.

RUSSIA.

The Jesuits lately banished from the Russian empire were in number about 800, of whom 300 were in Siberia and Kamtschatka. Their colleges in general had from 24 to 30 members; that of Moscow contained 140.

EGYPT.

The celebrated monument of antiquity, known by the name of Cleopatra's Needle, has been presented to his Majesty George IV. by the Pacha of Egypt. It is intended that it should be set up in Waterloo Place, opposite Carlton Palace. The weight of the column is about 200 tons; the diameter at the pedestal, seven feet.

INDIA.

A School-book Society has been formed at Madras, on the same plan as that at Calcutta. The objects of this Society will be the purchase, preparation, and publication of works useful in seminaries of learning, to be supplied either gratuitously or at a cheap rate. It will form no part of the design of the institution to furnish religious books; a restriction, however, very far from being meant to preclude the supply of moral tracts, or books of a moral tendency.

At a meeting of the Bombay Literary Society, Captain M'Murdo presented an interesting account of the late formidable earthquake in India. On the 16th June 1819, a violent shock took place in Cutch, which lasted about two minutes, and which, when at its height, occasioned a motion of the earth so undulatory that it was difficult to stand, and the waving of the surface was perfectly visible. Until the beginning of August, no day passed without one or more shocks; but subsequently they became less frequent, only occurring every third or fourth day till the 23d of November, which seems to have been the last distinct one. The shock of the 16th was the most serious. In the province of Cutch, no town escaped. The capital, Bhooj, suffered in many respects more severely than any other place; nearly seven thousand houses were overturned, and eleven hundred people were buried in the ruins. The works in the fortified towns were in general destroyed. The total of lives lost was about two thousand.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THEOLOGY.

Speculum Gregis; or parochial Minister's Assistant. 5s.

A Charge delivered at the Primary Visitation of Herbert Lord Bishop of Peterborough, in July, 1820, with an Appendix. 8vo. 2s.

Vision the First—Hades; or the Region inhabited by the Departed Spirits of the Blessed. 12mo. 3s. 6d.

A Defence of the People of England, in Answer to the Emissaries of Popery. 8vo.

Family Prayers, for every Morning and Evening in the Week; by the Rev. James Roberts. 18mo. 1s. 6d.

A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Chippenham; by the Rev. C. Lipscomb. 8vo. 2s.

The Rebellion of Absalom; a Discourse

preached at Kirkcudbright, by the Rev. W. Gillespie. 8vo. 1s. 6d.

An affectionate Address to those Dissenters from the Church of England who agree with her in the leading Doctrines of Christianity; by the Rev. S. Wix, A. M. &c. 6d. or 5s. per dozen.

Remarks on the Necessity of Conforming to Order, with respect to Clerical Vestments; and on the present dilapidated State of many Country Churches. 8vo. 1s.

Lectures on the Temper and Spirit of the Christian Religion; by Matthew Allan, Author of "Outlines of a Course of Lectures on Chemical Philosophy," &c. 8vo. 9s.

The History of Religious Liberty to the Death of George III.; by Benjamin Brook. 2 vols. 8vo. price 1*l.* 4s.

MISCELLANEOUS.

An Analytical Calculation of the Solar Eclipse of the 7th of September, 1820; by D. M'Grigger. 8vo. 3s.

A Guide to the Stars; by Henry Brook. 4to. 15s.

Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Religious Connections of John Owen, D. D. Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, and Dean of Christ Church, during the Commonwealth; by the Rev. Wm. Orme. 8vo. 12s.

Biographical Sketches of Dr. B. Franklin, General Washington, and Thomas Paine, with an Essay on Atheism and Infidelity. 1s. 6d.

Biographical Illustrations of Worcester; by John Chalmers, Esq. 8vo. 15s.

The Botanist's Companion. 2 vols. 12mo. 12s.

Pomarium Britannicum; by Henry Phillips. royal 8vo. 1l. 1s.

The British Botanist. 6 plates. 12mo. 7s. 6d.

The World Described, in easy Verse; by W. R. Lynch, with a map and engravings. royal 8vo. 5s.

The Benefit of a Sunday-School Education, exemplified in the History of Thomas James. 4d.

The Native Tribes, Animals, and Scenery of Southern Africa; by William Daniell, Esq. 4to. 3l. 3s. proofs on India paper 4l. 4s.

Portraits of the various tribes of Cosacks. 4to. 1l. 5s.

Pyne's History of the Royal Residences, with 100 coloured Engravings, representing the State Apartments. 3 vols. 4to. 24 guineas, bds. or 36 guineas, large paper.

No. I. Zoological Illustrations; by W. Swainson. 4s. 6d.

The Rudiments of Linear, Plane, and Solid Geometry; by N. J. Larkin, with 150 wood cuts. 12mo. 4s. 6d. sheep.

Domestic Wine-making, from all the various Fruits of this Country. 8vo. 7s.

The Cottager's Manual for the Management of Bees; by Robert Huish. 2s.

The New Practical Gauger; by M. Iley. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

Rise and Progress of the Public Institutions of Glasgow. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

Zoophilos; or, Considerations on the Moral Treatment of inferior Animals; by Henry Crowe, M. A.

The Ornithology of Great Britain; by John Atkinson. 3s. 6d.

Britannia's Cypress, a Poem, on the lamented Death of his late Majesty George III. f. cap. 12mo. 5s.

The Angel of the World, with other Poems; by the Rev. G. Croly. 8vo. 8s. 6d.

Sketch of the late Revolution at Naples. 2s. 6d.

A Catechism of Political Economy; by Jeane Baptiste Say; translated by John Ritcher. 6s.

Annals of Glasgow; comprising an Account of the Public Buildings, Charities, &c. by J. Cleland. 1l. 1s.

An Abridgment of ditto. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

Notes on Rio De Janeiro, and the Southern Parts of Brazil; by John Luccock. 4to. price 2l. 12s. 6d.

The Architectural Antiquities of Normandy; by D. Turner, Esq. 2 vols. royal 8vo. 2l. 12s. 6d.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

HAVING presented an outline of the Society's recent proceedings and correspondence in India and Western Africa, (see our Numbers for August and October,) we proceed to select a few particulars relative to the New Zealand Mission.

Mr. Marsden writes respecting the young New Zealanders under his care at Parramatta (New South Wales)—

"The chiefs' sons who are with me visit our orchard and vineyards, and are much astonished to see the fruits, and anxious to promote the cultivation of them in their own country.

"Various things here, which they had never before seen, furnish us with much conversation about the Maker of all. They see such a difference between our civilized and their savage state, that they cannot be persuaded that the same God made both them and us. When I tell them that there is but one God, they advance many arguments to prove my assertion incredible."

With reference to the seminary, Mr. Marsden states—

"After having natives living with me for more than four years, I cannot entertain a doubt of the success that

will attend the establishment of a seminary here for them. I am now erecting a commodious building on an estate which I purchased on the banks of the river opposite to the town of Parramatta. The situation is very pleasant, and convenient in every respect. The estate contains upward of 100 acres of land; and every operation of agriculture, gardening, nursery, &c. may be carried on, together with the exercise of the simple arts. Here the natives can be taught, and constantly employed. The produce of their labour will contribute something toward their support. They shall learn to plough, and sow, and reap, with the management of horses and cattle, and whatever else may be deemed advantageous to them."

Mr. Marsden had made a second visit to New Zealand. His intercourse with the natives, and particularly in a journey westward from the Bay of Islands quite across the island to the western coast, was most encouraging. The people are eager for the residence of missionaries among them. A new settlement has been formed at the Bay of Islands, on a large portion of land, consisting of 13,000 acres, situated at Kiddeekiddee, and purchased of Shunghee for 48 axes.

Mr. Marsden justly remarks: "If the Mission were attended with no other good than the preservation of the lives of our fellow-creatures, this is an object of vast importance. The value of the Boyd, which was cut off there, with all her crew, would have maintained the mission many years. No injury has happened to any European since the establishment of the settlement, from the North Cape to the River Thames; which shews what temporal good hath been already accomplished. Difficulties have, indeed, been very great and many; but they have not prevented the work from going on. Every thing has succeeded better than the most sanguine hopes could have warranted us to expect, in such a new and important undertaking."

Mr. William Hall makes the following statements, which will shew the progress of civilization.

"The natives under my direction and instructions work very well, almost beyond my expectation. I have taught six pair of sawyers to saw timber, and have frequently four or five pair at work at once. I have sawed upwards of a thousand feet with them myself. We have built three smiths' shops in the settlement; and have two na-

tives among us, who are taught the blacksmith's business. I have also built a smith's shop, and can make small adzes, nails, and many other useful things, which serve to purchase potatoes, and pay labour with. I have also a quantity of land in cultivation, more than sufficient to support my family the year round with wheat; and I mean to distribute wheat among the natives, with suitable encouragement and instructions how to cultivate it; and I hope it will be attended with the blessing of God, both for their present and future good. We keep increasing gradually, by making more improvements and cultivation every year."

Mr. Kendall writes:—"Although the New Zealanders are exceedingly superstitious, and what religion they profess is constituted of rites the most horrible and offensive to an Englishman and a Christian, yet it is a very encouraging circumstance that parents do not at all object to their children being instructed by us. They rather wish it: and the children themselves have always been ready to repeat their lessons when called on; and have been kept in a state of discipline far superior to my expectations, when we have had it in our power to give them a handful of victuals."

In the Appendix to the Nineteenth Report of the Society, various letters from the young New Zealanders, Tooi and Teeterree, were printed. We extract one of the shortest as a specimen, for the benefit of such of our readers as may not have seen the Report. Tooi thus addressed the Assistant Secretary of the Society, when on the point of leaving England:—

"Dear Reverend Brother—

"I am just told I going to leave you, day after morrow. I will therefore write you, dear Sir.

"I go home tell my countrymen, that Jesus is the true God. Atua is false—no God, all nonsense.

"I tell my countrymen, Englishman no hang his self—no eat a man—no tattooing—no fall cutting his self. My countrymen will say to me, 'Why Englishman no cut himself?' I tell them Book of Books say, 'No cut—no hang—no tattoo.' I tell them 'Jesus say all they that do so go to hell.' I tell them they sin—they do wrong. I know that Jesus Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin. I tell my poor countrymen so. He no find out the way to heaven—poor fellow! Jesus our Lord, He found a way to heaven for all who know him.

"Jesus Christ love me much. I no love Him once—my bad heart no love Him. I sinned too much for God. I hope the Lord Jesus Christ put in me a new heart and new soul. I then pray to Him, and love Him, and he love me.

"I go back to my country. I tell my countrymen, the Book, the Bible make all happy. Englishman, suppose a Christian, he very happy. New-Zealandman's spear make no happy. I tell my poor countrymen, Christians no fight, no use war-club, no spear—they read Book of Books—all true! says, No fight, all love.

"I go away—I leave all good friends behind—and I very sorry ship go very soon. I go home—I remember kind Missionary. He love me too much—he pray for me every morning and every evening. I pray for Englishman.

"I get home to New Zealand, and I go tell my countrymen, 'Come, countrymen, into house of worship, where true God is worshipped!'

"I hope you farewell. Good bye.

"Your affectionate Friend,

"THOMAS TOOL."

Mr. Kendall, who has resided several years in New Zealand, has returned on a visit to England, and has received deacon's and priest's orders, with a view to exercise his ministry in the scene of his mission. Having collected copious materials for fixing the language and preparing elementary books in the New Zealand tongue, it was thought of importance that he should avail himself of the advantages which might be afforded to him in this country, for proceeding on sure principles in the important work of embodying the language of these large and populous islands.

Two chiefs, Shunghee and Whykato, accompanied Mr. Kendall. Shunghee is one of the heads of a powerful tribe, which possesses a large quantity of land at and near the Bay of Islands. His age is about forty five; his mother who is now living and very old, having told Mr. Kendall that he was born soon after Captain Cook visited the Bay of Islands. Shunghee and his tribe have always been friendly to the settlers. He understands somewhat of English, but does not speak it. Whykato is one of the chiefs of Ranghee Hoo, at the Bay of Islands. His age is about twenty-six. He understands English tolerably well, and

can make himself understood.—The views and wishes with which Shunghee and Whykato have visited England will be best conveyed by themselves, as Mr. Kendall wrote them down from their mouths, without any prompting on his part:—

"They wish to see King George—the multitude of his people—what they are doing—and the goodness of the land. Their desire is, to stay in England one month, and then to return. They wish for at least one hundred people to go with them. They are in want of a party to dig the ground, in search of iron—an additional number of blacksmiths—an additional number of carpenters—and an additional number of preachers, who will try to speak in the New Zealand tongue, in order that they may understand them. They wish also twenty soldiers, to protect their own countrymen, the settlers; and three officers, to keep the soldiers in order. The settlers are to take cattle over with them. There is plenty of spare land at New Zealand, which will be readily granted to the settlers."—At present they have little notion of our holy religion; but are the subjects of a subtle and deeply-rooted superstition. They have conducted themselves with great propriety in this country.

The two chiefs are about to return immediately with Mr. Kendall to their own country, after having seen and learned much, which, it is hoped, may stimulate them in the civilization of their fellow-countrymen. The party were affectionately and appropriately addressed previously to their departure, by that zealous friend of every scheme of Christian benevolence, the Rev. Basil Woodd, at the Church Missionary House, together with two schoolmasters and their wives, destined for Western Africa. May the blessing of God rest on their labours.

HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

The number of schools belonging to the Society was reported at the last annual meeting to amount to 529, containing upwards of fifty-eight thousand pupils; being an increase during the year, of forty-nine schools, and upwards of eleven thousand pupils.

The funds of the Society, we are grieved to learn, have fallen short of the current expenditure of the year, in the amount of 2362*l.* in addition to a balance of 1342*l.* due to the treasurer

at the last audit. The increase of schools and children would have been far more considerable, if the wishes of the poor, and the applications from respectable gentlemen in Ireland on their behalf, could have been complied with, for the establishment of additional schools. Notwithstanding these checks, schools have been formed in four counties, to which they did not before extend; Queen's county, Cork, Waterford, and Kerry; and there is an immediate prospect of extending them into other counties. Many of the masters, who have commenced the moral and religious cultivation of these new fields of labour, were, at their first connexion with the Society, ignorant of the Scriptures and (being Catholics) prejudiced against the use of them; but they now proceed in the spirit of the Gospel, and with a competent degree of knowledge, to fulfil their arduous and important duties.

In addition to what has been said relative to the increased number of schools, the Committee report, that the circulation of the holy Scriptures has also been proportionably enlarged; and that the reading of them in Irish and in English by the Inspectors and Schoolmasters at convenient times, to such as are willing to attend—together with the instruction of adults—continue to be vigorously and successfully prosecuted. These branches of the Society's concerns have made it necessary to print, in the course of the last year, an additional number of 40,000 of the Society's spelling-books: and for the use of the adult population who have no desire to read English, and are partial to the old Irish letters, an edition of the spelling-book in the Celtic character has also been prepared and published.—The Society has been assisted with a further donation of 9000 English and 1000 Irish Testaments, from the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Fourteenth Report of the Society, from which we have abridged these particulars, goes on to mention the visit of Mr. Steven to Ireland, and the hostility, manifested on the part of the bigotted part of the Roman Catholics, to the plans of the institution. To these we have before adverted. The Report proceeds to state, that by means of the plans and exertions of the Hibernian Society, the attention of the gentry and landed proprietors in Ireland has been directed to the moral and

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religious education of the children of the poor. The schools were at first, and during several successive years, entirely supported by the friends of this institution; but of late, an annual subscription from benevolent and public spirited individuals, has been afforded to schools which have been formed in consequence of their respective applications; and a disposition to adopt the regulations of this Society for the education of the poor, and to afford pecuniary assistance for the promotion of this object, has evidently been on the increase. It appears, also, that the labours of the Society are hailed by the insulated Protestants in the Catholic counties in Ireland, as a merciful dispensation of Providence to preserve them and their offspring from the seductions of Popery, to which they have been imminently exposed. The elective franchise, being for a long time exclusively connected with Protestantism, continued the name of Protestant to many, who, neglecting the use, and being ignorant of the divine truths of the Scriptures, became slaves to the superstitious observances of the surrounding multitudes, and, at the point of death, frequently took refuge in their delusive hopes. But the schools of this Society appear to have occasioned a very beneficial change. The children of these persons having been taught the Scriptures, have communicated their knowledge to their parents; in consequence of which, a zeal for more than the name of Protestantism is now nearly becoming general.

The following are extracts from the Appendix, which contains the most interesting passages from the Society's correspondence during the year. One of its agents in Ireland writes:—

"I intended to have added other interesting occurrences which have passed within my own observation; but as time calls on me to close with the present sheet, I defer these in order to relate an interesting narrative I have had from T—, master of the school in K—, county of M—. As I have the notes of the communication before me, I give it nearly in his own words. 'In July last, when returning from S—, I called at a house near C—: the man of the house and his wife had just returned from Confession. The man seemed much concerned, and, on inquiry into the cause, he told me that his children had long attended a free

school (one of ours) and were provided with an English and Irish Testament; and that in confession that day, the priest had engaged him by promise, to commit both to the flames on his return home. The poor man seemed agitated, being loath to burn the books, and terrified at breaking his promise to the priest. I said nothing, anxious to see the conflict in his own mind. The man had the Irish Testament in his hand, a large fire was before him, and he stood apparently undetermined, when a wretchedly wicked neighbour of his entered the house, who, on learning the case, urged him vehemently to obey his priest and burn the book. The book was accordingly cast into the flames. I was so overpowered by surprise and horror at the action, that for some moments I could not stir—when, darting to the fire, I snatched up the book, which, to my astonishment, had not suffered the least injury from the fire. I then solemnly addressed him on the heinousness of the sin of attempting to destroy God's best gift to man—the revelation of his mercy to sinners, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The poor man seemed much distressed, and requested that I would read to him part of its contents. I read the First Epistle general of St. John, and the eighth of the Romans. He called upon the Lord to forgive the wicked act he had been just guilty of, in attempting to destroy so blessed a book, and begged of me to consent to remain with him until the next day, and that he would invite his neighbours to hear the book of God. I consented. His neighbours were soon collected, and I read to them for a long time. After the people retired, he would frequently ask me with much concern,—‘Do you think God will forgive me?’ and as my reply, I read to him the fifteenth chapter of Luke, also the eleventh of Matthew, the 27—30th verses; and these precious promises gave him hope. He escorted me on my way next morning, to the distance of three miles, and seemed fixed in his determination that his son should persevere in reading and learning to understand the Scripture; and that he would contrive to have him attend my night-school next winter, and cheerfully pay me for instructing him.’”

From P. C., an Inspector.

“We inspected Mr. H——’s school at G——. This is one of the best schools I

ever saw. He had eighty Testament readers in one class; forty of whom, repeated ten chapters each, and some of the others thirty. He had one boy who committed as many as sixty chapters to memory, in the course of this quarter; and, what is still more astonishing, he had another child, only four and a half years old, who repeated nearly six chapters at this inspection; and I was told by his parents and master that this was the third quarter in which he had had tasks to learn. There is scarcely a question I put to them respecting the Gospel, that they did not answer satisfactorily.

“I have often, within these five years past, visited this part of the country, and never saw, or expected to see, so great a reformation wrought in the minds of the people here, as there is now; but, blessed be God! there is nothing impossible with him. Both old and young are studying the word of God, and striving to become wise thereby. Scarcely a day passes in which there are not applications made to me for Bibles or Testaments. The people, who, not long since, were enemies to the Scriptures, are now reading them, and attending our night schools, in order to become acquainted with the word of God.

“On the 8th instant, I again visited H——’s school, and gave him a general inspection. He had one hundred and sixteen pupils present, eighty-one of whom, were Testament readers: the major part of which class, repeated from sixteen to twenty-four chapters each; although it is but two months since he was inspected before. The child mentioned above, as having repeated nearly six chapters, could, at this time, repeat seven; and the boy who repeated at last inspection sixty, now repeated sixty more. H—— has now, in the Testament class, ninety-one pupils. No person can have an idea of the good done in this and other places, by means of your humane and charitable Society.”

From J. R., an Inspector.

“The labours of the Society have proved very beneficial in this and every other part to which they have been extended. The children who are educated in the schools have been made great blessings to their parents and neighbours in reading to them at night. The little children are so fond of the Testament, that they get more of the

tasks than is required of them by the Inspector. What a blessing it is, to find a reader and a Testament in every cabin, and the old men and women blessing the Society for the great charity which they have bestowed on their children, and more especially for imparting to them the knowledge that enables them to comfort their parents in old age with the word of God in the English and Irish languages!

"I am happy to have it in my power to state another striking instance of the change wrought in the children's hearts, especially those educated in the Society. A short time ago, as I am informed, their chief employment was dancing, playing cards, dice, and every other wicked employment, as is the case in every part of the country: but the result of their being educated in the schools, and the study of the Testament, has been so effectual, that their delight is now to meet in the different houses in the village to read the Testament. It is delightful to hear small children, not ten years old, saying—'Mother, it is not for cursing or swearing that we are met, but to read the word of God; and we read in the same word, that God delights in little children learning his will.'"

From W. R., a Schoolmaster.

"I am sorry to say, that the flourishing state and hopeful prospect of this school is greatly obstructed by the tyrannical proceeding of the Catholic bishop and priests. The desire of the people for education is

every day increasing. At the last inspection of my night school, fifty-nine scholars were able to read Irish. Hitherto they have never had the happiness of hearing or seeing the word of God, so as to be able to form a judgment for themselves of its divine contents. The general behaviour of the people here has been much improved by their increased knowledge of the word of God; so that instead of meeting as in former times for the purpose of card-playing or gambling, sedition or conspiracy, they have of late been occupied in reading the Scriptures and recommending the practice to their friends and acquaintance. Such was their desire to learn the mind and will of God as he has been pleased to reveal it in his own word, that I have been requested by some who reside several miles from my school, to bring them Irish and English Testaments, and to read to them at their homes by night, which I have frequently done. But, I am sorry to add, that these pleasing prospects have been blasted by the breath of the priest of this parish, who, on Sunday last made this practice the subject of his canonical discourse, and strongly condemned those individuals who were so employed; assuring them that it was sufficient to bring them to the devil; and that, if they did not relinquish the vile practice of reading the Bible and harbouring those who disperse it, he would cut them off from the church. This terrible denunciation has, for the present, produced the intended effect; and ignorance and vice seem likely to resume their reign."

VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

FOREIGN.

THE conference of sovereigns at Troppau has commenced; but no authentic particulars have yet been published respecting the objects or results of their deliberations. The Emperors of Russia and Austria are there in person; the Crown Prince of Prussia represents the King of Prussia, who has been too unwell to attend; and ministers from all the allied powers have assisted at the conferences. The deliberations, it is supposed, may have reference to the affairs of Spain and Portugal, but more especially to those of the Neapolitan kingdom. We most earnestly hope that noth-

ing will induce the allied powers to undertake a hostile interference in the concerns of these states. We are not, however, without serious fears on the subject, especially as it has been stated in the course of the late negotiations between Naples and Palermo, that the inseparable union of the Two Sicilies is guaranteed to his Neapolitan Majesty by a secret article of the Congress of Vienna, with an express stipulation that no representative government shall be established in Italy.

FRANCE.—The trials of Gravier, Boudon, and Legendre, for the base and cowardly plot against the duchess de Berri,

have ended in the conviction and capital condemnation of the two former: the latter is acquitted.

The elections under the new law have been proceeding quietly in France. The result is likely to be favourable to the moderate, or ministerial party, and affords a hope that ministers may be able to rescue themselves from that state of dependance on the ultra-royalists, into which recent events had thrown them, and which might have been fatal to the tranquility of the country. The great body of the French naturally feel alarmed by any arrangements which threaten the revival of exploded claims: the prevalence of the ultra-royalist party, they conceive, would lead to that issue.

POLAND.—The Polish Diet has rejected, by a majority of 120 voices to 3, a sketch of a new criminal code presented to them by the Emperor of Russia. The Emperor, in his speech at closing the session, upbraids the representatives of Poland for thus declining the favour he had intended them by the laws which his ministers had dictated; and urges them to repair the mischief as far as possible by promoting tranquillity and good government in their respective neighbourhoods. The Marshal of the Diet addressed the Emperor in an exculpatory oration, in which he ascribes the reluctance of the deputies to accept the new penal code, to their wish to have a longer time for deliberation, in order to come to a just decision. It would appear from these circumstances that the representative body in Poland is really a deliberative assembly, capable of acting as a check on the imperial power; at least, that it is by no means in a state of servile and abject dependence on the will of the conqueror.

SPAIN.—The first session of the Cortes has closed with a speech from the throne, delivered by commission. As far as appears on the surface, the new machine works easily, and all parties profess the utmost good humour towards each other. The Cortes and the King seem both to be popular; and certainly, in his official conduct, the latter has done nothing to the prejudice of the new constitution. The enactments during the session have been generally enlightened and useful; though, as might naturally be expected under all the circumstances of the case, some of

them have been of a more rapid and sweeping kind than was perhaps quite judicious. The partial disturbances which have occurred in the provinces, have, it is said, been quelled: measures have been concerted for strengthening the naval force of the country, with a view especially to the protection of its commerce; and a variety of plans are under consideration for regulating the internal affairs of the nation. Among other interesting topics, the liberty of the press, and the introduction of trial by jury, have excited great attention. The army establishment is fixed at 424,000 men, with discretion to raise 12,000 militia. But the most important regulation which has yet been carried into effect, is the suppression of the monastic institutions. Every monk in sacred orders is to receive a pension according to his age; and a provision of 100 ducats per annum is held out to nuns, to induce them to renounce their vows. No new convent is to be founded, nor any novice proposed, nor any person to be permitted in future to assume the monastic habit. The government has already taken possession of a vast number of convents. There can be no doubt of the serious evils resulting to Spain from its overgrown monastic institutions, which have not only been a considerable drawback upon the productive industry of the nation, but have checked the progress of civil and religious information, and tended to keep the country enveloped in the ignorance and bigotry of the middle ages. But we fear that, in the present zeal against them, no small portion of religious indifference and infidelity has mixed itself with the professions of liberality and patriotism. We dread exceedingly the sudden revulsion of a nation like Spain, from a state of pitiable darkness to a false and intoxicating philosophy, which is, if possible, tenfold worse. It is some guard against this result, that a system of national education is about to be adopted. We have already mentioned that the inquisition has been wholly suppressed; and that all exclusive privileges, whether they regard a man's standing in the eye of the law, or his liability to public burdens, have been abolished.

NAPLES and SICILY.—The dispute between Naples and Sicily has not yet terminated. Palermo surrendered last month to the Neapolitan commander, General Pepe, who, on taking possession of the forts, granted favour-

able terms of capitulation, and promised a general pardon; in consequence of which, the affairs of state returned to their usual course, and the troops which had been taken prisoners rejoined the royal standard. The Parliament of Naples, however, has refused to acknowledge the convention; alleging, that General Pepe exceeded his powers, and that it is contrary to the glory and interest of the united kingdom, and to political treaties, to allow of any alteration in the connexion of the two Sicilies. It remains to be seen what will be the effect of this rejection upon the minds of the inhabitants of Sicily. If Austria assume a hostile attitude, Naples will have work enough on its hands nearer home.

DOMESTIC.

The proceedings respecting the Queen in the House of Lords have taken a turn which, under all the untoward circumstances of the case, we were disposed to hope, might be productive of as little inconvenience as any issue that could have been devised. On this point, however, we must now express ourselves with a great degree of hesitation. For the affair is by no means concluded; and to what further evils the angry passions of parties and the agitated feelings of the public—wrought upon as they will be by the insidious arts of a factious press—will lead, it were impossible to anticipate.

The evidence in defence of the Queen having been closed, Mr. Denman and Dr. Lushington summed up the case on her Majesty's behalf, and were replied to by the King's attorney and solicitor general. On Thursday, the 2d of November, a motion having been made that the bill should be read a second time, a debate commenced, which was prolonged till the Monday following, when it was carried by a majority of 28; the numbers being 123 to 95. In this memorable debate, most of the leading members of the house delivered their sentiments; many of them at great length, and with considerable power of eloquence and argument. Both the ministers and the opposition met the subject, professedly, without party considerations. More than thirty peers, who usually vote with ministers, were in the minority; while Lord Grenville, and several opposition lords, were in the majority. Three several protests were signed by a number of peers

against the second reading;—the first, on the ground that the alleged crime had been inferred, but not legally proved; the second, because although enough had been proved to shew the existence of guilt, yet as *all* the allegations had not been substantiated, the bill ought not to proceed further; and the third, on "general grounds." This last protest was signed not only by the chief opposition lords, but by several ministerial and neutral ones. The "general grounds," we presume, were the general inexpediency of bills of pains and penalties, and the undesirableness of proceeding farther with this particular bill in the present state of public feeling.

In the Committee a debate and division took place upon the divorce clause, which was carried by a majority of 129 to 67. To the composition of this majority, very different views and principles contributed. Many thought that the clause was necessary to give effect to the other provisions of the bill: many, however, of those who had voted against the second reading of the bill, voted for this clause, avowedly in order to ensure the final rejection of the measure, by clogging it with a provision to which it was known that numbers could not conscientiously assent, who nevertheless were convinced of the Queen's guilt, and were ready to vote for her political degradation. The King's Ministers themselves voted against the divorce clause, though it had been introduced by them, stating their full conviction that the reasons which had been alleged against it were unanswerable. Many lords, both temporal and spiritual, took up the subject on scriptural grounds. A consideration which evidently had great weight was, that the letter written by the King to the Queen, shortly after their marriage, and given in evidence in the course of these proceedings, was, in fact, a voluntary separation on his part; and that having thus "put her away," he was so far answerable for the consequences, (according to our Lord's own decision on the subject, Matt. v. 32,) that he could not justly claim a divorce on any ground of reason, precedent, or Scripture. The circumstance, however, which chiefly operated on the minds of their lordships in this instance, was rather hinted at than expressed: it referred to those particulars in the husband's own conduct which are usually considered by courts of justice as depriving him of a right to this specific

remedy. In consequence chiefly of the retention of the divorce clause, the majority on the third reading was reduced to nine; there being 108 for the bill, and 99 against it. Some of the bishops, in particular, shewed their conscientiousness in voting against a bill which they generally approved, from a due regard to the dictates of Scripture, which they considered would have been infringed by this enactment. In consequence of the smallness of this majority, Lord Liverpool felt it expedient to withdraw the bill.

Here it will probably be expected of us that we should express some opinion on these painful proceedings, and especially on the real import, as it respects the Queen, of the decision of the House of Lords. We are very willing to do so. In the first place, then, it will be allowed that the 123 peers who voted for the second reading of the bill must have believed her Majesty to have been really guilty of the adultery with which she was charged. It is not, however, to be inferred that the ninety-five peers who voted against the bill were of a contrary opinion in this respect. Very few among them declared themselves satisfied of her innocence; a greater number considered her guilt as not legally, however it might be morally, established: but there were many, probably a moiety of the whole, who, though convinced of her guilt, voted against the bill as in itself inexpedient, and as a measure calculated to disturb the peace of the country without the prospect of any adequate good to be obtained from it. They dreaded the transmission of the bill to the House of Commons, as pregnant with the greatest mischiefs. Supposing even that it should finally pass, it must still have occupied many months in a disgusting inquiry, accompanied by discussions of a more violent and inflammatory kind than any perhaps which have ever been witnessed in this country. And during this period, not only must all public business have been suspended, but the whole nation must have continued exposed to the demoralizing and polluting effects of such an investigation, and to the influence of a seditious press, resolved to avail itself of the aid of the Queen and the popularity of her cause, and of the unaccountable supineness of the government, to extinguish every remaining

principle of loyalty among the mass of the population, and then to bring about the revolutionary crisis which it had so long been preparing.—Such, we confess, was our own feeling. In common with the noble lords to whom we allude, we could not resist the force of the evidence, which, on a question of guilty or not guilty, would have compelled us to pronounce against the accused. But neither was it possible for us to shut our eyes to the tremendous evils which were to be apprehended from persisting in the bill. We could not therefore but hail the termination of the measure, in the House of Lords, as a deliverance from many great and obvious dangers. Whether or not it will ultimately prove so, we do not pretend to conjecture. But viewing the matter with our present lights, we can scarcely imagine a more disastrous event, in the present state of the public mind, and with a press set free from every wholesome restraint, than that the Bill of Pains and Penalties should have made its appearance in our House of Commons, ill calculated as that house is for the solemnity of judicial proceedings, and well adapted as it is, from its constitution, and, may we add? its composition, to serve the purpose of popular inflammation.

We need not describe the scenes which followed in the metropolis, and in every part of the country, on the bill having been withdrawn. The joy manifested on the occasion was doubtless with many the expression of honest exultation on the imagined deliverance of innocence from oppression and persecution. To such a feeling, wherever it existed, it is impossible for us not to do homage. But it cannot be denied, that in accepting the rejection of the bill, under all the circumstances of that rejection, as a triumph for the Queen, the persons so viewing it must have laboured under some degree of delusion. But let that pass. We should also most cordially rejoice, if we could persuade ourselves that the evils of this calamitous affair had been cured, either by withdrawing the bill, or by an illumination to celebrate that event as the victory of innocence. But we lament to say, that we feel no such persuasion. Amid the alternatives of evil which presented themselves to our minds, to withdraw the bill seemed to be the course which threatened us with the least. But we dare not

flatter ourselves that many and serious inconveniences are not still to be encountered before this unhappy affair shall have been brought to its final close. It obviously cannot remain in its present unsettled state ; and unless the parties chiefly concerned should be induced to sacrifice personal feelings and resentments to the public good, we can only look forward to a perpetuation of the same angry conflicts which have agitated the nation during the last five or six months, and which not only disturb the peace, but seem to us to threaten the very existence, of the country.

Parliament met on the 23d inst. and was immediately prorogued to the 23d of January. A strenuous effort was made by some members of the House of Commons to gain a hearing for a Message from the Queen. Their disappointment, caused by the sudden appearance of the Usher of the Black Rod, commanding their attendance in the House of Lords, was followed by such symptoms of disapprobation as are not usually heard in that assembly. There was no address from the throne previous to the prorogation : the intentions of government with respect to the Queen, therefore, are as yet unknown. Whatever they may be, we cannot but look forward with much anxiety to the next session of Parliament, which promises, we fear, to be a session of stormy debate. We contemplate also, with serious apprehension, the spirit of disaffection which has so widely extended itself in the land, and which is likely to be aggravated by the renewed discussions with which we must lay our account, on the unhappy business of the Queen. In the mean time, her advisers seem determined to prevent even a momentary respite of that agitation which has been excited in the country by the proceedings against her Majesty. Among many proofs of their solicitude to keep alive this popular feeling may be mentioned the Queen's intended procession to St. Paul's, on the 29th instant, for the professed purpose of returning thanks to God for her deliverance. We lament deeply that they should have resorted to this particular expedient for fomenting angry passions ;—that the rites of our holy religion should unhappily be made to minister to party violence ;—that a solemn act of worship should be resorted to as a mere *ruse de guerre* ; and the house of God, the God

of peace, be thus converted into the temple of discord.

But let it not be supposed, because we have thought it our duty thus to speak, that we are inclined to advocate the propriety of the various measures which ministers have deemed it right to pursue in this affair. On the contrary, from the first step to the last, as far as we have been able to form a fair and honest judgment, they appear to us to have acted with so much timidity and indecision, and with such a want of wisdom and foresight, as have tended exceedingly to abate our confidence in their capacity to guide the nation through the delicate and difficult, not to say perilous, circumstances in which it is now placed. In what we have said, or may yet say, therefore, we must be understood as not taking the side either of our present ministers, or of those who are opposed to them. The interests we are anxious to subserve are far more important than any which are involved in the continuance or removal of any one set of public functionaries. They are those of law and of social order, of morality and religion, which appear to us to encounter risks at the present crisis beyond any which we have previously witnessed. If our voice could reach throughout the kingdom, we should call upon every man—whatever may be his sentiments relative to the Queen—who wishes to preserve inviolate our blessings, both civil and religious—who wishes to guard our constitution in church and state from falling a sacrifice to the unmeasured violence of one set of men, or the unaccountable supineness and timid, vacillating policy of another—to endeavour, while there is yet time, to repel the danger which threatens us. What measures may be taken with that view, whether of association or otherwise, we pretend not to say. But one powerful means of averting the evils which impend over us, every Christian happily possesses ; and the use of this we strenuously recommend to them ; namely, prayer to the great God and Father of all, that he would be mercifully pleased to dissipate the coming storm, and to restore harmony and tranquillity to our distracted country ; that he would infuse into our councils a wise and conciliating spirit ; and that he would defeat the designs of those who are the enemies of peace and true religion.

ECCLESIASTICAL PREFERMENTS.

Rev. Ralph Spofforth, M.A. Eastington V. near Howden, Yorkshire.

Rev. F. Wrangham, M.A. F.R.S. the Archdeaconry of Cleaveland.

Rev. A. Luxmore, Barnstable V.

Hon. and Rev. Dr. Rice, Oddington R. Gloucestershire, on his own presentation as Precentor of York Cathedral.

Rev. James Davies, M.A. Barrington Parva V. Gloucestershire.

Rev. Elias Thackeray, formerly Fellow of King's college, Cambridge, to the living of Ardie, in the county of Lowth.

Rev. Daniel Rowlands, Llanycefen Perpetual Curacy, Pembrokeshire.

Rev. John Overton, B.A. Elloughton V. Yorkshire.

Rev. C. S. Bonnett, M.A. Avington V. near Winchester.

Rev. John Edgar, Kirketon R. Suffolk.

Rev. C. G. Jackson, Histon St. Andrew, with Histon St. Ethelred V. Cambridge-shire.

Rev. Dr. Carr, Vicar of Brighton, and Deputy Clerk of the Closet to his Majesty, Dean of Hereford, *vice* Dr. Gretton.

Rev. O. Taylor, M.A. (Head Master of the Cathedral School, Hereford) to the Prebend of Moreton Magna, in the Cathedral of Hereford.

Rev. W. K. Coker, B.A. North Curry V. Somerset.

Rev. Dr. Keate, Stowey V. Somerset.

Rev. Jeremy Day, M.A., Hetherset R. Norfolk.

Rev. W. J. Rees, M.A., to a Prebend in the Collegiate Church of Brecknock.

Rev. Shirley Western, Rivenhall R. Essex.

Hon. and Rev. A. Hobart, Walton on the Wolds R. Leicestershire.

Rev. W. Cross, M.A. (Vicar of Amwell,) Halesworth cum Chediston R. Suffolk, *vice* Avarne, deceased.

Rev. James Towers, Wherwell V. Hants.

Rev. Thomas Calvert, B.D. Norrisian Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, Winslow, or Winslow R. diocese of Chester.

Rev. Thomas Schreiber, Bradwell near the sea R. Essex.

Rev. Thomas Wynne, St. Nicholas V. in Hereford.

Rev. Charles Kendrick Prescott, Stockport R. *vice* his late father.

Thomas Turner Roe, M.A. Benington R. Lincolnshire.

Rev. W. Crabtree Checkendon R. Oxon.

Rev. J. Johnson, Fellow of Magdalen College, to the Donative of Sandford, near Oxford.

Rev. James Rudge, D.D. of Lime-house, to be Chaplain to Prince Leopold.

Rev. John Holmes, A.M. St. Nicholas R. with All Saints annexed, in South-elmham, Suffolk.

DISPENSATION.

Rev. D. Williams, M.A., Rector of Bleadon, has been instituted, by a Dispensation from the Archbishop of Canterbury, to Kingston Seymour R. Somerset.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WE are obliged to a Correspondent for pointing out to us a charge contained in a contemporary publication, of our having copied from their work a Letter from a Clergyman in India, which we inserted in our Number for August (p. 561,) under the head of Church Missionary Society, *knowing* it not to have been written by a friend or correspondent of that Society. The simple fact is, that we had never seen the Letter, except in the Missionary Register for July (p. 283,) where it appears under the general heading—"India within the Ganges : The testimony of a clergyman to the rapid advance of the natives will be read with great pleasure : 'Great things,' he writes, 'are going on,' &c." And there being no statement of its having appeared in any other quarter, we took it for granted that it was copied from the correspondence of some friend of the Church Missionary Society. The charge of an intentional misstatement of this kind is as little plausible as courteous ; for, even if we were dishonest enough wilfully to attribute to one society the merit that belongs to another, we should hardly be so silly as to do it at the certain risk of prompt detection.

ZHYAC ; J. M. W. ; L. L. B. ; D. M. P. ; CH. SOPH. ; B. B. ; J. D. ; W. V. ; A CONSTANT READER ; A A ΠΙΣΤΕ ; and KIMCHI ; are under consideration.

S. S. should have kept a copy of his "squib : " we cannot undertake to find it.